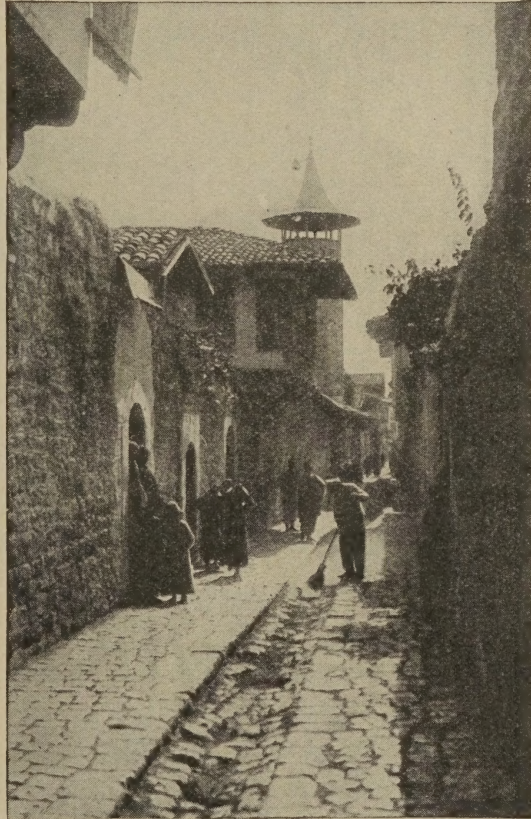


The Westminster
Senior Intermediate Quarterly
JULY - AUGUST - SEPTEMBER

1921



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ANTIOCH IN SYRIA

Edited by John T. Faris D.D.
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**ST. PAUL'S JOURNEYS
AND THE
EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(40-100 A.D.)**

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The Westminster Senior-Intermediate Quarterly

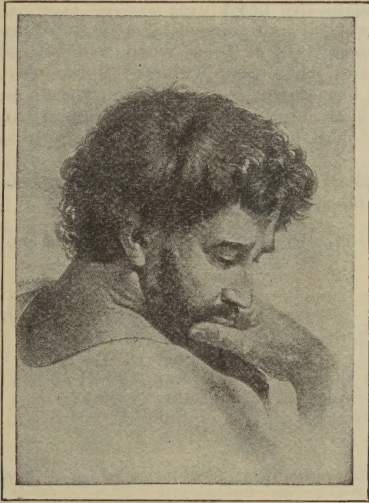
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FOREWORD

The lessons for the next six months introduce us to the life and work of the Apostle Paul. The life of a good and great man is always interesting, and Paul was one of the greatest and one of the best.

The story of his life is told in the book of The Acts, within the compass of a few chapters, and every person who would know the secret of his great life should read not once, nor twice, but many times, this short and thrilling story.

The lessons of the first quarter cover the period of the summer months when many are away from their homes. This should not hinder every pupil's following the thought of the lessons. Take with you, wherever you go, the Quarterly and your New Testament, and you will not only keep in touch with the lessons and be ready to take up the study on your return, but you will find the reading and study of the life of Paul most interesting.

Bishop Phillips Brooks once said, "Beware of losing your enthusiasm." Paul's enthusiasm never grew faint. When he gave his heart to Christ he gave everything he had. He kept nothing back. The motto of his life was, "For me to live is Christ."

"Christ! I am Christ's! and let the name suffice you,
Ay, for me too he greatly hath sufficed;
Lo with no winning words I would entice you,
Paul has no honor and no friend but Christ."

Let us first of all become well acquainted with Paul and then let us imitate him as he, himself, also imitated Christ.

Yours very sincerely,

Hugh Kerr

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THE EARLY LIFE OF SAUL

The Golden Text—"To-day if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts."—Heb. 3 : 7, 8.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 21: 39; 22: 3, 28; II TIM. 3: 14, 15; DEUT. 6: 4-9

Acts 21 : 39 But Paul said, I am a Jew, of Tar'sus in Ci-li'ci-a, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech thee, give me leave to speak unto the people.

* * * * *

Ch. 22: 3 I am a Jew, born in Tar'sus of Ci-li'ci-a, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Ga-ma'li-el, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day:

* * * * *

28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this citizenship. And Paul said, But I am a Roman born.

* * * * *

II Tim. 3: 14 But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

15 And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise

unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Je'sus.

* * * * *

Deut. 6: 4 Hear, O Is'ra-el: Je-ho'vah our God is one Je-ho'vah:

5 And thou shalt love Je-ho'vah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart;

7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes.

9 And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.

The Time—A.D. 1-33.

The Places—Tarsus and Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, June 27.....	Saul Born in Tarsus.....	Acts 22 : 1-3, 27, 28.
Tuesday, June 28.....	Hebrew Parents' Love for Children.....	Judg. 13 : 8-16.
Wednesday, June 29.....	Samson as a Baby Boy.....	Judg. 13 : 17-24.
Thursday, June 30.....	A Hebrew Boy Dedicated to God.....	I Sam. 1 : 21-28.
Friday, July 1.....	The Boy Jesus Visits the Temple.....	Luke 2 : 40-52.
Saturday, July 2.....	A Youth of Faith and Courage.....	I Sam. 17 : 31-37.
Sunday, July 3.....	The Lord Giveth Wisdom.....	Prov. 2 : 1-10.

THE EARLY LIFE OF SAUL

With this lesson we begin a six months' course in the study of the life and writings of Paul. Paul was in many respects the greatest of all Christ's followers, and his heroic life is full of interest. The book of The Acts contains an outline of his great career, and the thirteen Epistles in the New Testament, which bear his name, give us much additional information concerning him. We see, therefore, that the greater part of the New Testament contains either what others have written about Paul or what he himself has written. He is one of the world's greatest heroes and the French historian, Guizot, in writing concerning European civilization, says that Paul did more for Europe than any other man.

It is well, therefore, that we prepare ourselves for a careful and thoughtful study of this great man. Sit down some Sunday afternoon, begin with the ninth chapter of the book of The Acts, and read through without stopping to the end of the book. You will find that this is only some twenty-six pages and is thrillingly interesting. If you wish to read a modern life of Paul, written in beautiful English, Dr. James Stalker's "The Life of Paul," is one of the best. It is written in simple

and beautiful language and can be read in a few hours.

The lessons for the coming six months have the general title, "Life and Letters of Paul." They are divided into six sections, as follows: I. Saul the Pharisee (three lessons). II. Saul the Christian Preacher and Teacher (two lessons). III. Paul's First Missionary Journey (two lessons). IV. Paul's Second Missionary Journey (six lessons). V. Paul's Third Missionary Journey (four lessons). VI. Paul a Prisoner (nine lessons). These lessons carry us to about the year 70, of the first Christian century, and in studying them, we will visit almost every land bordering upon the Mediterranean—the lands known as, "the world" in Paul's day.

THE LESSON TITLE AND TEXT

The first lesson of the series introduces us to the early life of Saul. He became a Christian when he was more than thirty years old, and up to that time our knowledge of him is found only in scattered sentences here and there through the New Testament. The verses of the lesson taken from the book of The Acts, tell us that Saul was a Jew, a Pharisee, and yet a Roman citizen. He was born

in Tarsus, one of the great cities of Asia Minor, and educated partly there and partly at Jerusalem. The verses taken from Timothy and from Deuteronomy have no direct reference to Paul, but are chosen to introduce us to the customary influence and education which all Jewish boys experienced.

SAUL'S EARLY HOME LIFE

Like most Jewish boys, Paul had two names, a Jewish name, Saul, and a Gentile name, Paul. In Hebrew, "Saul" means "asked for," and like Samuel, he may have been the child of many prayers. Many explanations of Saul's two names have been given. It has been suggested that since his second name, Paul, occurs only after his intercourse with Sergius Paulus, Acts 13 : 9, he took the name of his distinguished convert. This custom was frequently followed, but in Paul's case it is unlikely. Augustine thinks that Saul chose the name "Paul," which means "little" as a mark of humility. All these suggestions, however, are quite unnecessary, for it was customary for Jewish boys to have both a Jewish and a Gentile name, and both Saul and Paul belonged to him from his birth. After his work took him mostly among Gentiles, he dropped his Jewish name and used exclusively his Gentile name "Paul."

Saul's father and mother were devout Jews, and belonged to the group known as Pharisees—Jews who were loyal to the letter of the Old Testament. It is suggested in early non-Biblical literature that Saul's parents had had their home in northern Galilee and that owing to religious persecutions after the death of Herod, they left Galilee and made their home in Tarsus. It is probable that Saul's parents were well-to-do and lived in comfort, and it is certain that, although his father was a loyal Hebrew, he was also a Roman citizen. Saul gloried in his Roman citizenship and asserted that he had been "Roman born." Acts 22 : 28. Roman citizenship had been conferred upon non-Romans for distinguished service, but later it could be purchased for money. Citizenship in the empire exempted from many degrading punishments, as scourging and crucifixion, and gave the right of appeal to the emperor himself, which right Saul claimed later in life. In a devout home, in the atmosphere of religion, with world advantages, Saul, the hero of the Christian faith was born.

SAUL'S NATIVE CITY

Saul was born in the city of Tarsus the western capital of the Province of Cilicia. Saul was proud of Tarsus. Speaking before the chief captain at Jerusalem, he said, "I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city." Acts 21 : 39. It was situated less than a mile from the sea, in a fertile valley, and in the time of Saul, was at the height of its prosperity. Tarsus was not only prosperous because of its commerce, but was one of the great university centers of the world. One of the early historians says that Tarsus was the principal

seat of learning at that time, and had outdistanced both Athens and Alexandria. Students flocked to Tarsus from all parts of the Roman Empire, and there Saul, although loyally trained in the Hebrew faith, would come in contact with the language and culture of the Greek and Roman world. Before he knew it, God was preparing him for his great mission among the people of every race and language. In the busy city Saul knew not only the language of his home, Aramaic, and the language of the Old Testament, Hebrew, but he also knew Greek, the language made universal by the conquests of Alexander the Great. When he began to speak, the chief captain said to him, "Dost thou know Greek?" Acts 21 : 37. When Saul spoke to the assembled Jews, "He spake unto them in the Hebrew language." Acts 22 : 2. A few quotations from Greek philosophers and poets are found among his words, Acts 17 : 28, showing that his education was not confined to the Hebrew Scriptures, but that he was also acquainted with the literature of other languages.

SAUL'S EARLY EDUCATION

The early education of Saul followed the line laid down in the Jewish Law. The words of Deut. 6 : 4-9, printed in our lesson text have been called the Magna Charta of the Jewish nation. Parents were obligated to teach their children the history and religion of their nation. Before he was ready for the synagogue school, Saul would know much of the Old Testament, having learned it in his own home.

At the age of six or seven, he would attend the school held in connection with the local synagogue. This school was called "the House of the Book," for the Old Testament was the only book used in the synagogue school. In this school Saul gained his wonderful familiarity with the teaching and language of the Scriptures. On account of the scarcity of manuscripts, most of the teaching was done by means of the oral method. After the teacher recited a verse, the pupils repeated it until it was carefully stowed away in the memory.

When he came to his thirteenth year, Saul became "a son of the law." He was looking forward to becoming a rabbi. He was almost ready for the rabbinical college and the greatest of the colleges was, of course, at Jerusalem. Perhaps at this time in his life he learned a trade, for every Jewish boy was compelled to know how to earn his living. Even the rabbis had been taught a trade. One was a shoemaker, one a miller, one a tailor, another a potter, and another a carpenter. Jesus himself was by trade a carpenter. The Romans and Greeks despised work and so kept slaves. The Jews honored work. Saul, after his school days in the synagogue were over, learned the trade of tent-making. The country around him was a great goat-producing country and the goats' hair was woven into a coarse fabric used for tent curtains. Often during his gospel ministry, Saul worked at his trade and sup-

ported himself. See Acts 20 : 34. The message of the gospel, concerning the dignity of labor was one of the things that revolutionized the Roman Empire. Saul often pointed to his hands to testify that he was not an idler, but a man of toil.

PREPARING TO BECOME A RABBI

When Saul reached the age of fifteen he probably entered the rabbinical college at Jerusalem. This was the age when Jewish boys entered college and in those days the course of study was of course very limited. John Calvin was fourteen when he entered the University of Paris. Saul tells us himself who his great teacher was. It is a wonderful thing to have at least one great teacher. Saul tells us that he sat "at the feet of Gamaliel." Acts 22 : 3. Gamaliel was a man of large and liberal spirit, see Acts 5 : 34. Saul was "subjected to the gracious influence of this wise and large-hearted teacher." In this rabbinical college, Saul studied the Old Testament. He studied methods of interpretation, and revered the very letter of the language, and became expert in argument and illustration. We are not permitted to follow his education farther. At the age of perhaps eighteen, he would graduate as a rabbi and from that time to the day when we find him busy persecuting the Christian Church, we know nothing whatever concerning him. Like Jesus who during many silent years, made his home at Nazareth, so probably Saul, after finishing his college course at Jerusalem, returned to Tarsus and there made his home, perhaps ministering as a rabbi in the same synagogue in which he had worshiped as a child.

THE RELIGION OF SAUL

In our next lesson we will study more carefully the religion of Saul during his early years, and here it is necessary only to say that after his education was finished, Saul was more confirmed in the faith of his fathers than ever. He spoke of himself in these words, "I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees," and later he testified "that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." Acts 23 : 6; 26 : 5. He was taught that only by keeping the whole Law of God could salvation be obtained. Saul's religion, therefore, became an effort to keep without fail every law, small or great, moral or ritual, which was written anywhere into the words of the Old Testament Scripture. Of course this is impossible. It was after such an effort that the Rich Young Ruler came to Jesus saying, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus said, "If thou wouldest enter into life, keep the commandments." The young Pharisee replied, "All these things have I observed: what lack I yet?" Sooner or later Saul would come face to face with a weary and dissatisfied heart, for law cannot satisfy without love.

It is strange that, although Saul was about the same age as Jesus, they never met. It seems that

Saul never saw Jesus in the days of his flesh. Nevertheless the seeking sinner sooner or later must find the seeking Saviour, but Saul had to travel over a hard and bitter road before he could come face to face with his Lord. The hymn written by Isaac Watts points out the difference between the Christian faith and the religion of the Pharisees.

Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain:

But Christ, the heavenly Lamb
Takes all our sins away,
A Sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.

My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Why was Saul also called Paul?
2. Where was Saul born? Why was he proud of his native city?
3. What was Saul's purpose in life?
4. How did Saul know so well the Old Testament?
5. Where did Saul receive his education?
6. What do we know about Saul's home and the attitude of his parents to religion?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 37. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper is the sacred use of bread and of the cup, as appointed by the Lord Jesus, in which, in thankful remembrance of him, we show forth his death and, in communion with one another, by faith partake of him.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Outline briefly the course of lessons for the next six months.
2. Why would you classify Saul among the world's great men?
3. What trade did Saul learn and why?
4. Was Saul from our point of view a well-educated man?
5. How could Saul be a Jew and at the same time a Roman citizen?
6. Show how God was preparing Saul for his future work.

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 27. Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

SAUL THE PHARISEE

The Golden Text—"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—I Tim. 1: 15.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 7: 54 to 8: 3; 22: 3, 4; 26: 4, 5, 9, 10

Ch. 7: 54 Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Je'sus standing on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57 But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord;

58 And they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59 And they stoned Ste'phen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Je'sus, receive my spirit.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Ch. 8: 1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Je-ru'sa-lem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Ju-dæ'a and Sa-ma'ri-a, except the apostles.

2 And devout men buried Ste'phen, and made great lamentation over him.

3 But Saul laid waste the church, entering into

every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison.

* * * * *

Ch. 22: 3 I am a Jew, born in Tar'sus of Ci-li'ci-a, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Ga-ma'li-el, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day:

4 And I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

* * * * *

Ch. 26: 4 My manner of life then from my youth up, which was from the beginning among mine own nation and at Je-ru'sa-lem, know all the Jews;

5 Having knowledge of me from the first, if they be willing to testify, that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Phar'i-see.

* * * * *

9 I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Naz'a-reth.

10 And this I also did in Je-ru'sa-lem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them.

The Time—April, A.D. 33.

The Place—Jerusalem.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, July 4.....	Saul the Pharisee.....	Acts 7: 54 to 8: 3.
Tuesday, July 5.....	A Pharisee's Prayer.....	Luke 18: 9-14.
Wednesday, July 6.....	Jesus Warns Against Pharisees.....	Matt. 23: 1-12.
Thursday, July 7.....	Jesus Denounces Pharisees.....	Matt. 23: 13-27.
Friday, July 8.....	Saul Persecutes the Christians.....	Acts 22: 3-10.
Saturday, July 9.....	Paul Makes His Defense.....	Acts 23: 1-8.
Sunday, July 10.....	Fear the Lord.....	Ps. 33: 1-9.

LEADING UP TO THE LESSON

Last week we studied the early and private life of Saul. This lesson introduces us to his public career. We are not told what he did during the years which followed his graduation from the school of the rabbis at Jerusalem. Probably he lived in his own native city of Tarsus until the events which followed the death and resurrection of Jesus, brought him out of private life into public life. It would appear that he had become a member of the sanhedrin, or council, which was the highest court of the Jews. He speaks of having given his "vote" against Stephen.

During these years of obscurity Saul lived the life of a Jewish loyalist. He belonged to the party called the Pharisees, who were loyal to the traditions of their nation, narrow in their interpreta-

tion of the Scriptures, and prejudiced against all reforms. Jesus suffered at the hands of the Pharisees. This lesson helps us to understand Saul's mental attitude toward the new gospel, and his reasons for opposing it so earnestly. The lesson also opens the way to the study of Saul's conversion and his later loyalty to the gospel.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

Ch. 7: 55. **Jesus standing.** See Luke 22: 69, where Jesus is spoken of as seated. Here he is represented as having risen to welcome and help the martyr.

58. **Stoned him.** The penalty for blasphemy. Lev. 24: 14-16. The Jews did not have the authority to put to death. The Roman Government alone had this authority, so that their act was not

only immoral but also illegal. **Their garments.** The Jews, even though in the wrong, sought to act in accordance with Jewish Law. Read Deut. 17 : 7.

Ch. 8 : 1. Saul was consenting. This shows us that Saul was in full sympathy with what had been done. See Acts 22 : 20. **Judæa and Samaria.** Probably Judea is used in the Roman sense. Judea and Samaria would include all of Palestine. The persecution was organized and thorough.

Ch. 22 : 4. This Way. Christianity is often spoken of in the book of The Acts as the "Way." Acts 9 : 2 ; 19 : 9, 23 ; 24 : 22.

Ch. 26 : 5. Straitest sect. The Pharisees were extreme in their loyalty to the ancient Jewish faith. Paul had been a strict Pharisee.

10. Many of the saints. The early Christians were called "saints," "believers," "brethren," "disciples." It was at Antioch they were first called Christians. Acts 11 : 26.

THE CHALLENGE OF STEPHEN

Acts 7 : 54

Stephen was one of the seven deacons appointed to care for the poor who needed help in the early days of the Church at Jerusalem. The apostles wished to give all their time to prayer and preaching, and for this reason seven men were appointed to care for cases of poverty which needed attention. The story of their appointment is interesting and should be read. Acts 6 : 1-7. The names of the seven men chosen as deacons were Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus. Two of them, Stephen and Philip, rose into prominence. The character of Stephen receives especial mention, and he is spoken of as a man "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit." His zeal and convincing oratory came to the ears of the high priests, who arrested him and brought him for trial before their council. Instead of retracting or apologizing for his utterances he began a public defense of his position. Read Acts, ch. 7. His words and arguments are remarkable. The priests could not silence him, and even Saul seems to have been helpless before the blows of his logic. He

argued that the Temple was temporary, that the priests had always resisted the spirit of God, had killed their prophets, and that they themselves had betrayed and murdered Jesus. "Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed them that showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers."

The story says that at this point the priests and leaders of the Jews were "cut to the heart" and "gnashed on him with their teeth." They could not argue with him, so they got angry.

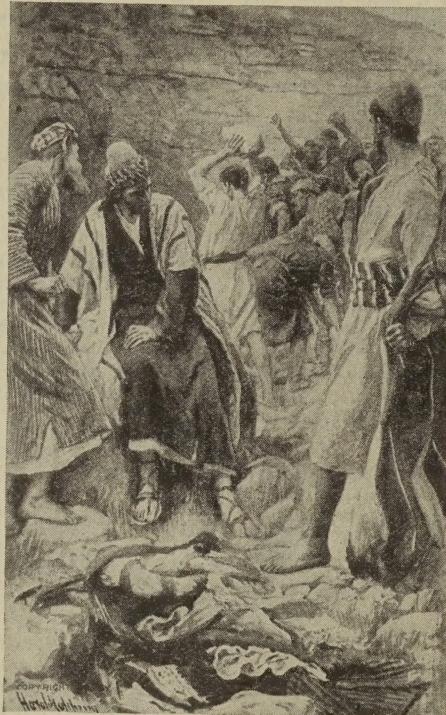
THE FIRST MARTYR

Acts 7 : 55-60

Stephen, seeing that it was useless for him to continue his address and knowing the attitude of his judges, suddenly stopped speaking. His face seemed as if illumined by the Spirit of God, and looking up, he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." It would seem as if Stephen had intentionally put himself in their power, for immediately they fastened upon his words as blasphemy, which, according to their law, was punishable by death, and, being passionately angry, they cast Stephen out of the city and stoned him. The power of life and death belonged only to the Roman Government and not with the Jewish council. Pilate had to sentence Jesus to be crucified. Perhaps Pilate, because of his own insecure position, had to overlook these outbreaks of lawless men. The Jewish leaders, however, were

careful to observe the letter of their own law. They led Stephen outside the city, and witnesses were present and threw the first stones as laid down in the Old Testament Law. Lev. 24 : 14-16 and Deut. 17 : 7.

The word "Stephen" means "a crown," and to him is awarded the first crown of martyrdom. He was the first to suffer death for Christ's sake. The story of his martyrdom is full of quiet courage, and unshrinking heroism. He died upon his knees, asking, like Jesus, that his enemies might be forgiven, and smiling up into the face of his Lord who had,



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THE STONING OF STEPHEN

as it were, risen from his throne to meet and welcome him. The noise and tumult of the tragedy die away and the closing verse ends in quietness and confidence: "He fell asleep."

"Stoned to his death by those for whom
His soul's last prayer was sped
Unto his God, 'Avert the doom
That gathers o'er their head';
And the stones that bruised him and struck him
down
Shone dazzling gems in his victor's crown;
And as his spirit fled,
A light from the land where the angels dwell
Lingered saintly and grand where the martyr fell."

ONE OF THE EYEWITNESSES

Acts 7: 58-60; 8: 1

The death of Stephen was the means of bringing Saul face to face with the Christian faith. Saul was one of the eyewitnesses of Stephen's death. At his feet "the witnesses laid down their garments." The story goes on to tell that not only was Saul present at the tragic death of Stephen, but that he "was consenting unto his death." It met with his approval and consent. What effect did Stephen's wonderful death have upon him? Saul must have seen the sincerity, the courage, the faith of this young man, who died like a hero, with a smile upon his face. One of the greatest poems ever written concerning Saul, makes him say:

"Saint, did I say? With your remembered faces
Dear men and women whom I sought and slew!
Ah, when we mingle in the heavenly places
How will I weep to Stephen and to you?"

Surely the death of Stephen and those whom he afterwards persecuted weighed upon the conscience of Saul and awakened him to his wrongdoing and to his need of a salvation which only Christ could supply. This, however, was not the immediate effect upon Saul. The death of Stephen only quickened his zeal. He was "exceedingly mad" against all Christians and entered into a conspiracy with the priests and Pharisees of Jerusalem to destroy all who persisted in teaching and preaching that Jesus who had been crucified, was the Jewish Messiah, the Saviour of the world.

THE FIRST PERSECUTION

Acts 8: 1-3

The first effect of the persecution, carried on so thoroughly after the martyrdom of Stephen, was to drive the Christians out of Jerusalem into other cities. "They were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria." The apostles alone remained in Jerusalem. They stood their ground, and their courage and faith seem to have been like a wall around them. Saul, however, became the chief leader of the persecution. He "laid waste the church, entering into every house, and

dragging men and women committed them to prison." It is the picture of a man restless, bitter, and angry. It is a terrible story. Saul tried to compel Christians to blaspheme the name of Jesus, not stopping short of putting them to death. The scenes of those awful days never died out of his memory. Years after he had become a Christian he said, "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." In all this sad and cruel work, Saul was terribly in earnest. He thought that in persecuting the Christians, he was doing the will of God. He says that he lived "in all good conscience." The more the Early Church was persecuted, however, the more it developed and grew. There is an old saying to the effect that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, and the persecution carried on by Saul scattered the truth of the gospel into all parts of the world.

SAUL THE PHARISEE

Acts 26: 4, 5

During these years of opposition to the Christian Church and his cruel persecution of the Christians, Saul was a devout and loyal Pharisee. Indeed it was because he felt that by doing something beyond the ordinary, he could win favor with God, that he carried on his persecution against the Christians with untiring zeal. Dr. Stalker says: "He saw more clearly than anyone else what was the drift of Christianity; and it seemed to him destined, if unchecked, to overturn all that he considered most sacred. The repeal of the Law was in his eyes the obliteration of the one way of salvation, and faith in a crucified Messiah blasphemy against the divinest hope of Israel. Besides, he had a deep personal interest in the task. Hitherto he had been striving to please God, but always felt his services to come short; here was a chance of making up for all arrears by one splendid act of service. This was the iron of agony in his soul which gave edge and energy to his zeal. In any case he was not a man to do things by halves; and he flung himself headlong into the task."

A Pharisee believed that by keeping the law of God perfectly he would thereby merit salvation. Such a course must lead in one of two directions, Either a man will discover that he cannot keep the law perfectly and will sink into hopeless despair, or else, thinking he has kept God's law completely, he becomes self-righteous. Usually the latter effect was produced in the lives of Pharisees. They became self-conceited, self-righteous, and hypocritical. Jesus drew a lifelike portrait of the Pharisees in his parable. "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee; and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get. But the publican,

standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner."

It was the Pharisaic spirit which opposed Jesus and at last nailed him to the cross, and Saul was merely carrying out the program and the policy of those who had been guilty of putting Jesus to death. The Pharisee was the best example of Jewish religion. He was loyal to Scripture, he believed in the righteousness of God and the judgment to come, but because he sought by means of his own deeds to merit salvation, he became narrow in his social fellowship and hypocritical in his religious life.

CHRISTIAN AND PHARISEE

The Pharisee's highest aim was to keep the Law. The Christian's highest aim is to love God. Saul thought that he was pleasing God by persecuting those who followed another religion. A Christian could never be a persecutor. The law of the Christian is to love, not to persecute, and, although the Christian Church has often been guilty of persecution, it has at such times been disloyal to the spirit of the gospel. The spirit of Christianity is found in the words of Bishop Faber's familiar hymn.

For the love of God is broader
Than the measures of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind:
But we make his love too narrow
By false limits of our own,
And we magnify his strictness
With a zeal he will not own.

There is plentiful redemption
In the blood that has been shed;
There is joy for all the members
In the sorrows of the Head.
If our love were but more simple,
We should take him at his word;
And our lives would be all sunshine
In the sweetness of our Lord.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What does the word "Pharisee" mean?
2. What position in the Church did Stephen occupy?

3. Why did Stephen's address lead to his death?
4. What part had Saul in the martyrdom of Stephen?
5. Did the death of Stephen have any effect on Saul?
6. What is the difference between the spirit of a Pharisee and the spirit of a Christian?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 38. How was the Lord's Supper appointed?

A. The Lord's Supper was appointed by the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed, when he took bread and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me";

And also the cup and gave it to his disciples, saying: "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins: drink ye all, of it."

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What led to the appointment of deacons in the Early Church?
2. Outline the address of Stephen which led to his death.
3. Show how Saul in his persecution was carrying out the policy of the priests and Pharisees who crucified Jesus.
4. What good effect had the persecution upon the Church?
5. Show how Pharisaism leads to self-righteousness or to despair.
6. Can you illustrate Saul's character as a Pharisee and as a Christian from Jesus' parable of the Pharisee and the Publican?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 28. Wherein consisteth Christ's exaltation?

A. Christ's exaltation consisteth in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

Lesson III—THE CONVERSION OF SAUL.

The Golden Text—"Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—I Tim. 1: 15.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 9: 1-12, 17-19a

For entire lesson, see Acts 9: 1-19a.

1 But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

2 And asked of him letters to Da-mas'cus unto

the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Je-ru'sa-lem.

3 And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he

drew nigh unto Da-mas'cus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven:

4 And he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Je'sus whom thou persecutest:

6 But rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

7 And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Da-mas'cus.

9 And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.

10 Now there was a certain disciple at Da-mas'cus, named An-a-ni'as; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, An-a-ni'as. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Ju'das for one named Saul, a man of Tar'sus: for behold, he prayeth;

12 And he hath seen a man named An-a-ni'as coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight.

* * * * *

17 And An-a-ni'as departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Je'sus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

18 And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized;

19 And he took food and was strengthened.

The Time—A.D. 33-35.

The Place—Damascus.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, July 11.....	The Conversion of Saul.....	Acts 9 : 1-9.
Tuesday, July 12.....	The Conversion of Saul.....	Acts 9 : 10-19.
Wednesday, July 13.....	Saul Sinned Ignorantly.....	I Tim. 1 : 12-17.
Thursday, July 14.....	Faith and Repentance Necessary for Forgiveness..	I John 1 : 5 to 2 : 2.
Friday, July 15.....	True Repentance.....	Ps. 51 : 1-17.
Saturday, July 16.....	Repentance and Forgiveness.....	Luke 15 : 11-24.
Sunday, July 17.....	A Prayer of Repentance.....	Ps. 86 : 1-12.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

2. **Letters to Damascus.** Acts 26 : 12. The Jewish council, or sanhedrin, had authority over Jews even outside Palestine. **The Way.** Acts 19 : 9, 23; 22 : 4; 24 : 14, 22. A name for the gospel. "The way of the Lord."

4. **Saul, Saul.** Jesus speaks to Saul in Hebrew. Luke, who is telling the story, gives us the very words of Jesus.

10. **Ananias.** Probably the leader of the Christian Church in Damascus. He may have been converted at Pentecost, or he may have fled from the Jerusalem persecution.

11. **House of Judas.** We do not know who is meant. It is interesting to notice how accurate are the details of the story.

15. **A chosen vessel.** An instrument chosen and appointed by God to do God's will. Rom. 9 : 22, 23. The original means "a vessel of election."

17. **Laying his hands on him.** A symbolic act by which through his servant, God bestowed upon Saul not only physical healing, but the gift of the Holy Spirit.

A LESSON IN GEOGRAPHY

Saul, having done all he could do against the Christians at Jerusalem, obtained official authority to carry on the persecution in Damascus, where doubtless many Christians had gone for safety. Damascus was the former capital of Syria, and

was to become the capital again, after the decay of Antioch in the seventh century. It is spoken of as the oldest city in the world. The Jews used to say that Damascus was the home of Adam and Eve after their expulsion from Eden. It was a city in the time of Abraham. Gen. 14 : 15; 15 : 2. It has continued as a city for four thousand years, and has to-day a population of two hundred and fifty thousand. In writing of Damascus, Dr. David Smith says: "She occupies the midst of a lovely plain, green and fruitful, watered by the river Barada, the ancient Abana, and bounded westward by Mount Hermon and the long ridge of Anti-Lebanon; and the climate is delightful since the plain is raised some twenty-three hundred feet above the level of the Mediterranean. The city was the principal station of caravans from the East, and her markets were thronged with merchants. Her beauty was the admiration of the world. A Hebrew prophet styled her 'the city of praise . . . the city of my joy'; and to this day the Arabs speak of her as 'pleasant Damascus,' 'honorable,' 'holy,' 'blessed Damascus,' one of the four terrestrial Paradises."

Two roads led from Jerusalem to Damascus. One led through Samaria northward, while the other crossed the Jordan at Jericho and led through Perea. This latter route was probably the route which Saul chose. The distance was about one hundred and forty miles and would take about a week's

journey on foot. Try to trace his journey on the map.

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

The conversion of Saul is one of the greatest events in history. The book of The Acts tells the story three times, in the ninth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-sixth chapters. "Saul's conversion at once gave Christianity a higher social status. He was an educated man, of good family, a rabbi, and (probably) a member of the sanhedrin. It could no longer be objected to the teachers of the new faith that they were all ignorant and unlettered men.

"The conversion of Saul is a turning point in the history of Christianity. By conversion he becomes not merely a Christian, but an enlightened Christian."

He became the messenger of the gospel to the whole world. He always claimed that he was an apostle because he had been called and chosen by Christ himself. II Cor. 11 : 5 ; Gal. 2 : 8 ; Acts 22 : 21.

SAUL GOES TO DAMASCUS

Acts 9 : 1, 2

When Saul had received authority from the chief priest, who was probably Caiaphas (the same who had delivered Jesus to be crucified), he started with a few followers on his long journey. The journey of one hundred and forty miles would take him a week, and during this quiet period he would have time for reflection and thought. Saul must have been dissatisfied with his own religion, for he tells us in the seventh chapter of Romans, how he struggled for peace in his own soul. He must have been greatly perplexed over the testimony and conduct of the Christians whom he had persecuted. He had not been able to answer the arguments of Stephen, and his words suggest that his efforts to make the Christian blaspheme ended in failure. Acts 26 : 11. Saul was too wise, too brilliant intellectually to ignore the witness of the early Christians to the resurrection of Jesus, and as he sought in vain for some solution, the probable truth of the disciples' testimony must have presented itself to his mind again and again. When Paul tells the story of his conversion himself, he tells us that Jesus said to him, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad," Acts 26 : 14, thus suggesting that

it was fruitless for him to resist God's purpose for him. At the same time Saul journeyed with authority to arrest and bind and bring to Jerusalem any Christians he might find at Damascus.

THE VISION ON THE HIGHWAY

Acts 9 : 3-7

There is an old tradition that the scene of Saul's conversion was about ten miles south of Damascus, and in sight of the city. The story suggests that it was noonday and tells that suddenly he was enveloped in a brilliant, dazzling light, above the brightness of the Syrian sun. So sudden and so dazzling was the light that Saul fell to the ground as one dead. Then a voice spoke to him in the language of his childhood, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" In the midst of the blinding light, Saul saw Jesus, but not recognizing him, he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" The answer must have startled Saul. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Paul learned that Jesus and his followers are one, and that when he was persecuting the Christians he was persecuting Christ himself. Jesus himself said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."

When we try to understand and explain this wonderful miracle we are faced with this question: Was the appearance of Jesus to Saul spiritual and internal, or physical and external? In Gal. 1 : 16, Paul speaks of God's revealing "his Son in me." To the Corinthians, however, Paul said: "Am I not an apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord?"

I Cor. 9 : 1. Paul considered that the appearance of Jesus to him was of the same order as his appearance to the other apostles after his resurrection. The outstanding fact of the supernatural vision was that Jesus by appearing to Saul proved that he had risen from the dead and was alive. It is interesting to note that Saul alone saw the Lord and heard his voice. His attendants saw only a light and heard a noise. "His companions neither saw the Lord nor heard his voice. They saw the blaze of light, but they did not see the glorious form; and they heard a voice, but it was the voice of Saul making reply to the heavenly question, and



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THE SO-CALLED "HOUSE OF ANANIAS." IN DAMASCUS

they wondered at what appeared to them a one-sided conversation." It will be interesting to compare the three accounts of Saul's conversion. Acts, chs. 9, 22, 26.

SAUL'S RECEPTION AT DAMASCUS

Acts 9 : 8, 9

When the vision disappeared, Saul lay on the ground bewildered and blind. He was helpless and had to be guided by the hand of his attendants into Damascus, and for three days sat in darkness, neither eating nor drinking. It was a totally different entrance from the entrance he had planned. He had journeyed to Jerusalem with an official commission to arrest and take back for trial to Jerusalem all Christians who proved loyal to the new gospel. Doubtless the news of his approach had traveled on before him and the Christians in Damascus, in fear, though in great faith, would devote themselves to prayer. It may be that they had faith to pray for Saul's conversion, but they were hardly prepared to be told that Jesus had met Saul on the way and changed his heart, and that Saul had been led into the city as a helpless, blind man. It is one of the greatest events in all history. Saul was the outstanding representative of the leaders of the Jews and by becoming a Christian he not only caused dismay among his former friends, but added courage and hope and joy to those who had once feared the very sound of his name. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity," and when the day seemed darkest for the Christians, God turned their darkness to light and blessed them beyond their fondest dreams.

SAUL AND ANANIAS

Acts 9 : 10-16

For three days and nights Saul fasted and prayed. His thoughts were his food during those anxious days. He had been taken to the home of a Jew named Judas, in the street called Straight, and there he remained until God guided him out of his darkness. There was in Damascus a Christian named Ananias, perhaps the leader of the Christians in the city. To Ananias God appeared in a vision and told him of Saul's plight, and assured him that Saul's heart had been prepared for his coming and that he was expected. Probably Saul had known Ananias. It may be that Saul's purpose in going to Damascus, was to arrest this very man, and now God commissions him to appear of his own will before Saul and proclaim to him the Christian gospel of pardon and peace. We do not wonder that Ananias was not only reluctant, but alarmed. God not only reassured him but told him what great service Saul was to render in the coming days. "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake."

It is interesting to see how God prepares not

only the messenger but the person who is to receive the message. He prepared Ananias to speak to Saul, and he prepared Saul to hear Ananias. It is always so. When God puts a message in our hearts he also prepares the hearts of those who are to receive it. We are workers together with God.

SAUL THE CHRISTIAN

Acts 9 : 17-19

Ananias may have been reluctant to fulfill his mission, but he did not hesitate. He followed the directions given, and the fact that he found Saul at the place and in the condition described in the vision would confirm him in his mission. He knew that Saul, the persecutor, had become Saul, the Christian. If they had been former friends in the Hebrew faith, with what new meaning would Saul listen to the first words of Ananias: "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Like a dear friend, Ananias laid his hand upon Saul's head and as he spoke, "straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized."

The blindness faded from his eyes and the darkness from his heart. The vision on the Damascus road, the three dark days of prayer and silence, the vision of Ananias and his sudden appearance, had by the Spirit of God, confirmed him in his new-found faith and without hesitation, and we doubt not with manifest gladness, he was baptized in the name of Christ Jesus the Lord. It was a marvelous conversion and his open and public confession sent a thrill of inexpressible joy through the Christian Church, and a terrible fear into the hearts of his former friends who were now to be his enemies.

When men fight against truth they fight against God, and when they fight against God, they always lose. The Spirit of God cannot be silenced and he reads men's hearts through all barriers that human hands erect. Who among the early Christians had faith to pray for the conversion of the leader of the persecution? The hearts of men, however, are in the hands of God. This is what is called "conversion." The word means "to turn around." Sometimes conversion is sudden, like Saul's, and sometimes we are led as was Timothy by natural and gentle ways into love for God. When Jesus has revealed himself to us and we know him, we, too, say with Saul, "What shall I do, Lord?"

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What effect had the death of Stephen upon Saul?

2. Why was Saul on his way to Damascus?—
3. Was any good purpose served by Saul's three days of blindness?
4. How did Ananias help Saul to become a Christian?
5. Why was Ananias afraid to visit Saul?
6. What does it mean to be a Christian?

2. Why did Jesus appear miraculously to Saul?
3. What was Saul doing during his three dark days?
4. What do we mean by conversion?
5. What three accounts are given of Saul's conversion?
6. Why was Saul's conversion so important?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 39. How should we come to the Lord's Supper?

A. We should come to the Lord's Supper with true sorrow for our sin, with glad assurance of God's forgiveness in Jesus Christ, and with confidence that he will give us new strength to serve him.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What human influences helped Saul in becoming a Christian?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 29. How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit.

Q. 30. How doth the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. The Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.

Lesson IV—SAUL PROCLAIMS JESUS AS THE CHRIST

The Golden Text—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. 16 : 16.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 9: 19b-30

19b And he was certain days with the disciples that were at Da-mas'cus.

20 And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Je'sus, that he is the Son of God.

21 And all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that in Je-ru'sa-lem made havoc of them that called on this name? and he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests.

22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews that dwelt at Da-mas'cus, proving that this is the Christ.

23 And when many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel together to kill him:

24 But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates also day and night that they might kill him:

25 But his disciples took him by night, and let

him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

26 And when he was come to Je-ru'sa-lem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.

27 But Bar'na-bas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how at Da-mas'cus he had preached boldly in the name of Je'sus.

28 And he was with them going in and going out at Je-ru'sa-lem,

29 Preaching boldly in the name of the Lord: and he spake and disputed against the Gre'cian Jews; but they were seeking to kill him.

30 And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Cæs-a-re'a, and sent him forth to Tar'sus.

The Time—A.D. 33-45.

The Places—Damascus, Arabia, Jerusalem, Tarsus.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, July 18.....	Paul Preaches Christ	Acts 9 : 20-30.
Tuesday, July 19.....	Paul Learns from Jesus Christ.....	Gal. 1 : 11-24.
Wednesday, July 20.....	The Gospel Which Paul Preached.....	I Cor. 15 : 1-11.
Thursday, July 21.....	Paul's Story Before Agrippa.....	Acts 26 : 12-23.
Friday, July 22.....	Paul's Story Before Agrippa.....	Acts 26 : 24-32.
Saturday, July 23.....	Paul's Charge to Timothy.....	II Tim. 4 : 1-8.
Sunday, July 24.....	Put Your Trust in Him.....	Ps. 40 : 4-11.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

19. **Certain days.** Compare v. 23. **After many days.** The notes of time here are very indefinite.

From Gal. 1 : 16-18 we learn that between Saul's conversion and his visit to Jerusalem there was a period of three years.

22. Saul increased the more. Saul's argument became more convincing and his own zeal grew with his study of the Scriptures and his witnessing for Christ.

27. The apostles. According to Gal. 1:17 Saul stayed fifteen days at Jerusalem and saw there only James and Peter.

29. Grecian Jews. Jews who spoke Greek. They were Jews living beyond Palestine, speaking Greek and using a Greek Bible. They were usually at enmity with the Hebrew-speaking Jews.

30. To Tarsus. It is natural that Saul would wish to testify to Christ in his own home. In the time of Saul, Tarsus had access to the sea.

SAUL IN DAMASCUS

Acts 9:19b-22

Saul soon revealed his faith in Christ. He was not a man to keep silent. Whatever he did was done with his whole heart. The motto of his life was "This one thing I do." When he was a Hebrew he was "a Hebrew of Hebrews." When he became a Christian he said, "For to me to live is Christ." Immediately after his baptism he began to testify to the truth of the Christian faith. He had been commissioned to the synagogue in Damascus and thither he went with his message. But what a message! The people expected him to denounce the claims of Jesus and to outline his policy of persecution. Instead, "straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God." No wonder his hearers were amazed and bewildered. They even doubted if it could be Saul who was so speaking. They looked at one another and said, "Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havoc of them that called on this name?" Had he not come to Damascus to arrest and take bound to the chief priests any who so testified that Jesus was the Christ? It was such a transformation that the people were astonished. How long Saul continued to preach we are not told, but he must have spent some time delivering his message. His power increased with his testimony, and he silenced and confounded the Jews who challenged him, proving from Scripture and from his own experience that Jesus was indeed the Christ. It would be interesting if we could have had Saul's first sermon, but we know from his Epistles, what he would say, and the eloquent words that would fall from his lips. When Saul gave himself to Christ he gave himself completely. He said:

"Christ! I am Christ's! And let the name suffice you;

Aye, for me, too, he greatly hath sufficed;

Lo, with no winning words I would entice you;

Paul has no honor and no friend but Christ."

THE VISIT TO ARABIA

Gal. 1:13-17

Sometime soon after his conversion and immediately following his first public testimony concern-

ing the fact that he was a Christian, Saul retired from public life. He tells us himself that he went into retirement. The whole course of Saul's life had been so completely changed that it was necessary for him to take time to readjust himself and prepare himself for his new task.

Many men have done this. After his baptism Jesus retired into the wilderness. Moses was in the land of Midian for years. Augustine resigned from his position as professor of rhetoric and retired to the country home of his friend. John Bunyan in his retirement in Bedford jail dreamed his immortal story of "The Pilgrim's Progress." Martin Luther was carried off by a friend and given a period of rest and quiet in a German castle. It was on the lonely island of Patmos that John saw the vision of the New Jerusalem. In retirement Saul's old life slipped away from him, and he became in thought and speech and life a servant of Christ. The place of his retirement was Arabia. Arabia was of course the great peninsula of Mount Sinai.

What Saul did in the silence of the desert, we can well guess. It was a time of prayer and penitence, a time of study and surrender of himself to his new Lord and Master.

THE RETURN TO DAMASCUS

Acts 9:23-25

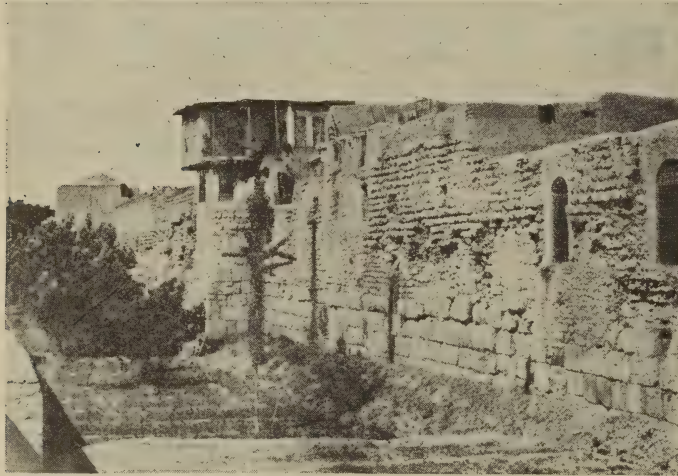
How long Saul remained in Arabia we cannot tell. It may have been days, or even months. When he was ready for his task, he went back to Damascus. His first Christian friends were there and would receive him gladly. Here he preached Christ for some time, perhaps for a period of two years. Between Saul's conversion and his visit to Jerusalem which follows his ministry at Damascus, was a period of three years. Gal. 1:18. His preaching and testimony were so powerful that the anger of the Jews was stirred, and they determined that nothing but Saul's death would satisfy them. The zeal that had once burned in Saul's own heart against the Christians now burned in their hearts against Saul. He was to be treated as he himself had treated others. The plot to kill him had the sanction of the governor. II Cor. 11:32, 33. The way of escape was closed, and every gate watched, but Saul's friends were equal to the emergency and at night when it was dark they lowered Saul in a basket from the window of the house which overlooked the city wall, and so he escaped. There is a saying to the effect that "man is immortal till his work is done," which means that our times are in God's hands, and, that in the midst of danger and even death, his plan lives on. God had chosen Saul for a great mission, and no evil could befall him when he was doing God's will. This is the first story of how God rescued Saul from imminent death. It is not the last story, however, for again and again we will find him face to face with death.

SAUL'S VISIT TO JERUSALEM

Acts 9 : 26-29

Saul made good his escape from Damascus in the night and before the day broke he was on his way to Jerusalem. In the Epistle to the Gal., ch. 1 : 18, he tells us that his purpose in going to Jerusalem was to see Peter. He had of course heard from his fellow Christians about Peter and his loyalty to the Lord, and it was natural that he should wish to hear from the lips of Peter many of the details of the life of Jesus.

Saul probably traveled to Jerusalem over the same road by which he had gone three years before to Damascus. When the sun rose he would look back upon the city where he had first testified



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THE WALL OF DAMASCUS

According to tradition it was here that Saul was let down in a basket

for Christ. With what different feeling he was now returning to the Holy City! "What an emotion smote his heart at the first distant view of the Temple, that house of sacrifice, that edifice of prophecy. Its sacrifices had been realized, the Lamb of God had been offered; its prophecies had been fulfilled, the Lord had come unto it. As he approached the gates, he might have trodden the very spot where he had so exultingly assisted in the death of Stephen and he entered them perfectly content, were it God's will, to be dragged out through them to the same fate."

His first effort was to discover the apostles and cast in his lot with them. This was the only thing for him to do, for now he was one with them, both in faith and suffering. The disciples, however, were afraid of him. They were not sure of his conver-

sion. They thought that perhaps he had been insincere about his confession of Christ and that he sought to spy upon them. It is always difficult for one to live down his past, and Saul had come from Damascus without letters of commendation. One man however believed in him. He was Barnabas, a rich Christian from Cyprus who had given his property for the common good of the Christian community at Jerusalem. Acts 4 : 36, 37. "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit." Acts 11 : 24. He believed in Saul. He had either heard of his work at Damascus or knew Saul's character well enough to know that he could never be insincere. He was a man who believed in other men. After the disciples had refused to have anything to do with Saul, Barnabas found him and brought him to the apostles and vouched for him and told them of the wonderful work he had done at Damascus. And so Saul was welcomed into the fellowship of the Church at Jerusalem, and for fifteen days, "enjoyed the fellowship of Peter and James." Gal. 1 : 18.

SAUL AND PETER

Gal. 1 : 18; Acts 9 : 28-30

It would be interesting to know what Saul did during those fifteen days in Jerusalem. We are told that his main purpose was to see Peter. What a wonderful time Peter and Saul would have together! It would be to both of them a never-to-be-forgotten visit. Saul would tell of having seen Jesus, of Jesus' appealing presence, and of his awakening conscience. On the other hand Peter would tell Saul all about the life and ministry of Jesus. He would repeat his words. He would retell his parables. He would go over the story of his death and crucifixion. Probably they would go out together to visit Calvary and Gethsemane. Peter would tell about his own betrayal and denial, and how after the resurrection the Lord appeared to him and healed his broken heart. It would be a wonderful time to both Peter and Saul.

But Saul was not satisfied to use his time in Jerusalem for himself. He went in and out among the synagogues, where the Greek-speaking Jews worshiped, and there he testified for Christ as Stephen had done on the day of his death. The same spirit was there that was present when Stephen spoke. The Jews plotted to kill Saul. That was the only way they could silence him and answer his arguments. Saul was divinely warned of his danger and told to leave Jerusalem. Acts 22 : 17-21. His friends, too, were eager to save his life, and when

they knew that if he tarried in Jerusalem, death would be his reward, they took him secretly to Cæsarea on the seacoast, and sent him off by ship to his home in Tarsus.

SAUL AT TARSUS

Acts 9 : 30

For about six years Saul lived in his native city of Tarsus. He would have a wide field for service, both in his own home and in the surrounding country. It seems strange that during these long years we have nothing recorded concerning him. Doubtless God was preparing him for his great work in the world. In one of his Epistles, Gal. 1 : 21, he tells us that he went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. During these busy years Saul would carry on his work among his relatives and throughout the provinces. "In his own family, we may well imagine that some of those Christian 'kinsmen,' whose names are handed down to us, possibly his sister, the playmate of his childhood, and his sister's son, who afterwards saved his life were, at this time, by his exertions gathered into the fold of Christ."

"It is true that he was yet 'unknown by face' to the scattered churches of Judea. But they honored him of whom they had heard so much. And when the news came to them at intervals of all that he was doing for the cause of Christ, they praised God and said, 'Behold! he who was once our persecutor is now bearing the glad tidings of that faith which formerly he labored to root out'; 'and they glorified God' in Saul."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What did Saul do immediately after his conversion?

2. By what name did Saul describe Jesus?
3. Why did Saul return to Arabia?
4. How did the Jews seek to silence Saul?
5. For what purpose did Saul go to Jerusalem?
6. What happened to Saul at Jerusalem? Why did he go to Tarsus?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 40. What is prayer?

A. Prayer is communion with God in the name of Jesus Christ, in which we tell God of our love to him, our sorrow for our sins, our thankfulness for his gifts and our desires for ourselves and others.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Give an outline of the events of this lesson.
2. Why did Saul leave his work at Damascus to go to Arabia?
3. How did Saul secure his wonderful understanding of the gospel of Christ?
4. Why were the apostles afraid of Saul after he had preached so long at Damascus?
5. What advantage was it for Saul to visit Peter?
6. Why was Saul so successful as a preacher?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 31. What is effectual calling?

A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

Lesson V—SAUL TEACHING AT ANTIOCH

The Golden Text—"For a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people."—Acts 11 : 26.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 11: 19-30; 12: 25

Ch. 11 : 19 They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phœ-ni'ci-a, and Cy'prus, and An'ti-och, speaking the word to none save only to Jews.

20 But there were some of them, men of Cy'prus and Cy-re'ne, who, when they were come to An'ti-och, spake unto the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Je'sus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord.

22 And the report concerning them came to the

ears of the church which was in Je-ru'sa-lem: and they sent forth Bar'na-bas as far as An'ti-och:

23 Who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord:

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

25 And he went forth to Tar'sus to seek for Saul;

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto An-ti'och. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with

the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in An-ti'och.

27 Now in these days there came down prophets from Je-ru'sa-lem unto An-ti'och.

28 And there stood up one of them named Ag'a-bus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Clau'di-us.

29 And the disciples, every man according to his

ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Ju-dæ'a:

30 Which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Bar'na-bas and Saul.

* * * * *

Ch. 12 : 25 And Bar'na-bas and Saul returned from Je-ru'sa-lem, when they had fulfilled their ministration, taking with them John whose surname was Mark.

The Time—A.D. 44, 45.

The Place—Antioch.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, July 25.....	Saul Teaching at Antioch.....	Acts 11 : 19-26.
Tuesday, July 26.....	Paul's Charge to Timothy.....	I Tim. 4 : 6-16.
Wednesday, July 27.....	Paul Urges Us to Pray.....	I Tim. 2 : 1-7.
Thursday, July 28.....	Paul Urges Us to Give.....	I Cor. 16 : 1-8.
Friday, July 29.....	Paul Provides Help for the Poor.....	Acts 11 : 27-30.
Saturday, July 30.....	Paul's Idea of Our Daily Duty.....	Rom. 12 : 9-21.
Sunday, July 31.....	The Precepts of the Lord.....	Ps. 19 : 7-14.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

19. **Phœnicia, . . . Cyprus, . . . Antioch.** Phœnicia lay along the coast of the Mediterranean and contained the cities of Tyre and Sidon. Cyprus is an island off the coast of Phœnicia. Antioch was the capital of Syria.

20. **Cyrene.** Cyrene was in Northern Africa. Locate on the map. **Greeks.** They were not Greek-speaking Jews, but Gentiles speaking Greek, and therefore heathen.

22. **Sent forth Barnabas.** Barnabas was from Cyprus. He had befriended Saul in Jerusalem when the disciples were afraid of him, and was a man of wide sympathy.

25. **To seek for Saul.** Saul had for at least nine years been laboring quietly in his home at Tarsus.

26. **With the church.** The word "church" refers not to a building but to the people. For a year they lived free of personal charge.

27. **Prophets.** A prophet is one who speaks for God. He forth-tells as well as foretells. They were classed next to the apostles. "Apostles . . . prophets." Eph. 4 : 11.

28. **Claudius.** Emperor of Rome, A.D. 41-54. There were several famines in his time. Josephus refers to a severe famine, A.D. 45, 46.

BETWEEN THE LESSONS

We pass in our study of the life of Saul from the ninth chapter of The Acts to the middle of the eleventh. The verses between the lessons, occupying parts of three chapters, tell the interesting story of Peter's missionary work. It will help you to understand much of what happens later if you will read these verses between the lessons. Let us remember that up to this time, the apostles, including Saul, had confined their efforts to the Jews and the Greek-speaking Jews. In ch. 10 Peter received Cornelius, a Roman, into the Christian Church, which was a great and a new departure. The action of Peter in receiving Cornelius was re-

sented by his fellow workers, and Peter had to defend what he had done. This prepares us for the new departure to which we are introduced in our lesson, where not only Christians from Cyprus and Cyrene began to preach to the Gentiles, but where Saul and Barnabas at Antioch threw open the doors of salvation to Jew and Greek alike. This was a new thing in the world. Later in his letter to the churches in Galatia, Paul said, "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3 : 28.

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES

Acts 11 : 19-21

After the death of Stephen, recorded in Acts, ch. 7, we are told in the first verse of the eighth chapter that, "there arose . . . a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles." In the fourth verse it is further stated that, "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word."

The author has traced the career of Saul from the martyrdom of Stephen to his own conversion to the Christian faith, and now in our lesson he traces the life and work of some obscure Christians who labored during these twelve or more years among the Jews of Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. He merely mentions these, however, to pass to a new development of the Christian faith. We are told that certain men from the island of Cyprus and from Cyrene, in the northern part of Africa, had preached in Antioch the gospel to the Gentiles. It is important to understand that the word "Greek" in v. 20, means not Greek-speaking Jews, but Gentiles. These men who are nameless had had great success. We are told in v. 21, "And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord." It is inter-

esting to remember that Simon, who bore the cross for Jesus, was from Cyrene. Barnabas was from Cyprus and in Acts 13 : 1, "Lucius of Cyrene," is named as prophet or a teacher. These men had for the first time openly offered the gospel to Gentiles and had had marked success. They were the first Christians who purposely went forth to evangelize the world. The apostles up to this time had confined their message to Jews. They thought that Christianity was merely a Jewish religion. Christians had come to Phœnicia and Cyprus and Antioch preaching Jesus to Jews only, but from among these converts there were some from Cyprus and Cyrene who in time went to Antioch and preached Jesus also to the Greeks. That was a wonderful new departure. These men of Cyprus and Cyrene were the leaders in the first missionary forward movement.

THE COMMISSION FROM JERUSALEM

Acts 11 : 22-24

The gospel traveled along the great trade roads, and over these same highways news also traveled. In course of time, word was received at the mother church in Jerusalem as to what was happening at Antioch. When the apostles heard that Gentiles were being received into the Christian Church at Antioch, they were filled with concern, for that meant that all social barriers were being broken down between Jew and Greek, and that Judaism was no longer essential. Even though they were filled with concern, they did not act rashly. They acted wisely and cautiously. They determined first of all to know the facts, and so they commissioned Barnabas to go to Antioch and investigate the true state of affairs. Barnabas was a man of large sympathies and kindly disposition. He is spoken of as "a good man." Acts 11 : 24. "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord." Twice before we have met with him, once when he surrendered his property and gave it to the Church, and again when he stood sponsor for Saul in Jerusalem when the disciples were afraid of him. Acts 4 : 36, 37; 9 : 27. Barnabas soon understood what had taken place at Antioch and we are told that he was "glad," and he himself encouraged these new Gentile Christians to cleave unto Christ their Lord with all their heart.

God surely guided the Church at Jerusalem when Barnabas was chosen, for he imposed no condition upon these new Christians but simply encouraged them to persevere.

SAUL AT ANTIOCH

Acts 11 : 25, 26

Barnabas quickly perceived that help was needed. He could not do the work himself, and the revival which had begun in Antioch needed help. After thought and prayer, the memory of Saul came before him. It was at least nine years since he had met Saul in Jerusalem, and then he had seen him for only a few days. It may be that Barnabas had known Saul before he became a Christian, but, whatever the reason, Barnabas was sure that Saul was the one man for the situation. He left Antioch and traveled across the mountainous country to Tarsus where Saul had been quietly laboring. He persuaded Saul to return with him to Antioch. We are not told how long it took Saul to decide. We know only that he went to Antioch with Barnabas and there began his great public career as a Christian missionary.

Antioch was one of the three great cities in the Roman world. It ranked next to Alexandria and Rome. It was beautifully located on the River Orontes, fifteen miles from the sea. It was largely a Grecian city. The races of the world mingled there, and there the vices of the world flourished. It was a wicked city. Its climate attracted

wealthy Romans, and its life has been described as a "perpetual festival of vice." Here, in what was then the "Gate of the East," Saul and Barnabas labored. For a whole year they taught "much people," and here for the first time "disciples were called Christians." Up to this time the followers of Jesus had been called "disciples," "saints," "brethren," "believers," but in Antioch they were called "Christians." It was given as a term of reproach. It was a nickname, and the people of Antioch were famous for their ability to coin nicknames. They called the Emperor Julian, with his long beard, "The Goat." The name Christian was first a name of derision, like the names Puritan, Quaker, Methodist. Christians were identified with the crucified Christ. But in a short time these Christians, by



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ANTIOCH. THE BIRTHPLACE OF GENTILE CHRISTIANITY

their fine conduct and beautiful characters, changed the word into the most wonderful word in any language. It was a new name for a new religion. Within a year, a new type of character, of social life, of worship were created in Antioch, and for the new life, a new name was needed.

TRUE CHRISTIANITY

Acts 11 : 27-30

The true spirit of this new religion was quickly shown. Jesus had said that a tree is tested by its fruit. In this way, too, we can test a church or a Christian. The little community of Christians at Antioch was quickly put to the test. In those days famine was frequent and poverty was common. It happened that there came down from Jerusalem to Antioch certain prophets, and one of these, Agabus by name, proclaimed that a great famine would cover the land. This actually did come to pass in the reign of the Emperor Claudius. Josephus tells us of such a famine in the year A.D. 44. The people of Antioch were better prepared for the scarcity, but the Christians of Judea felt the pinch of hunger. Jerusalem seems to have had many poor, and Antioch was the first to begin sending help to the "brethren" at Jerusalem. Afterwards other churches followed the example of Antioch. Everyone "according to his ability" sent relief and it was sent by "the hand of Barnabas and Saul." This was a beautiful thing to do. It not only revealed the spirit of true Christianity, but it certified to the loyalty of these new Gentile Christians, and brought the mother church at Jerusalem into most intimate and affectionate terms with the members of the great new church at Antioch.

Thus quickly did the church come to define her faith in terms of service. A religion that does not give help is not the religion of Jesus, "who went about doing good."

BARNABAS AND SAUL

Acts 12 : 25

When Barnabas and Saul had fulfilled their mission, they returned to Antioch. The story of Saul's life is interrupted to give place for an account of the martyrdom of James, the apostle. Herod Agrippa I, in order to please the Jews, put James to death by the sword. When he saw that what he had done pleased the Jews, he laid hold on Peter, intending at the passover to put him to death, but God intervened and Peter escaped. It is an interesting story and should be read. Acts 12 : 1-19. Instead of Peter's meeting with death, Herod himself perished most miserably, ch. 12 : 20-23, and "the word of God grew and multiplied."

When Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch, there accompanied them a young man, John Mark. He was a cousin of Barnabas'. Col. 4 : 10. His mother's name was Mary. We will hear more of him later. When they returned to Antioch, so strongly did the larger work out in the world appeal

to the Christian leaders that "as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." This is the beginning of Saul's great missionary work and introduces us to his first missionary journey. They were sent forth on this great evangelistic campaign in the spirit of prayer, dedicated to the greatest work in the world. It was the first campaign of the Church to fulfill the last commission of their Lord. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

"Proclaim to every people, tongue, and nation
That God, in whom they live and move, is Love:
Tell how he stooped to save his lost creation,
And died on earth that man might live above."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Tell the story of the conversion of Cornelius as related in Acts, ch. 10.
2. Give a brief description of Antioch.
3. Why was Barnabas sent to Antioch?
4. How did Saul become related to the church at Antioch?
5. Explain the meaning of the word "Christian."
6. How did the Christians at Antioch show their love for the Christians at Jerusalem?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 41. After what manner did Jesus Christ teach us to pray?

A. Jesus Christ taught us to pray after this manner:

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." Matt. 6 : 9-13.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Who were the first foreign missionaries?
2. Why was Antioch an important city?
3. For what reason did the apostles confine their first preaching to Jews?
4. What does the word "Christian" mean?
5. What influence had Barnabas upon Saul?
6. In what practical way was the religion of the church at Antioch revealed?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 32. What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?

A. They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, sanctification, and the several benefits which, in this life, do either accompany or flow from them.

PAUL IN CYPRUS AND IN ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA

The Golden Text—"Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."—Acts 1: 8.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 13: 1-12

For entire lesson, see Acts, ch. 13.

1 Now there were at An'ti-och, in the church that was *there*, prophets and teachers, Bar'na-bas, and Sym'e-on that was called Ni'ger, and Lu'ci-us of Cy-re'ne, and Man'a-en the foster-brother of Her'od the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Bar'na-bas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Se-leu'ci-a; and from thence they sailed to Cy'prus.

5 And when they were at Sa'a-mis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their attendant.

6 And when they had gone through the whole island unto Pa'phos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Je'sus;

7 Who was with the proconsul, Ser'gi-us Pau'lus,

a man of understanding. The same called unto him Bar'na-bas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God.

8 But El'y-mas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith.

9 But Saul, who is also *called* Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him.

10 And said, O full of all guile and all villany, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the proconsul, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

The Time—A.D. 47.

The Places—Cyprus and Asia Minor.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, August 1.....	Paul a Missionary in Cyprus.....	Acts 13: 1-7.
Tuesday, August 2.....	Paul Journeys to Antioch.....	Acts 13: 8-15.
Wednesday, August 3.....	God in Israel's History.....	Acts 13: 16-24.
Thursday, August 4.....	Paul Explains the Death of Christ.....	Acts 13: 25-33.
Friday, August 5.....	Paul Teaches the Resurrection of Christ.....	Acts 13: 34-43.
Saturday, August 6.....	Paul's Teaching Opposed.....	Acts 13: 44-52.
Sunday, August 7.....	God's Chosen Servant.....	Isa. 42: 1-7.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

1. **Antioch.** Distinguish between this Antioch, the capital of Syria, and the Antioch in Pisidia, mentioned in v. 14. Antioch in Pisidia was a city in the Roman province of Phrygia and a Roman colony. **Prophets and teachers.** Prophets were men inspired to speak a message from God. Sometimes they were also teachers, and gave instruction to believers. **Barnabas.** These names are interesting. Barnabas was from Cyprus, Lucius from Cyrene, Symeon was a Jew with the Roman second name, "Niger," one Manaen was connected with the house of Herod, and Saul was the missionary to the Gentiles.

2. **Ministered.** The word denotes service in the Temple, but is here used to mean Christian worship. Num. 4: 37; Heb. 10: 11. **Separate me.** The Holy Spirit made known the will of God, perhaps by one of the prophets. Compare Rom. 1: 1, "Separated unto the gospel of God."

4. **Seleucia.** The seaport of Antioch north of the mouth of the Orontes.

5. **Salamis.** The seaport of Cyprus nearest to the port of Seleucia, on the mainland.

6. **Paphos.** The capital of the island of Cyprus. It was noted for its worship of Venus.

7. **Proconsul.** The Roman proconsul who was a civil governor and did not need the presence of soldiers. He was a man with an open mind.

PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

The missionary program of the Early Church is given in the opening verses of the first chapter of the book of The Acts. Before he left his disciples, Jesus said to them, "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." These words are rightly chosen as the golden text. They outline the Church's missionary policy. Already the gospel had been preached to the people of Jerusalem and Judea. Philip had preached in Samaria, and there a great revival had taken place. The gospel had spread

to Antioch in Syria, and now we are introduced to the missionary movement which will carry the gospel to Rome and to the ends of the known world.

In connection with Paul's life and work, three missionary journeys are always emphasized, and it is well for us clearly to define these three stages in his great work. Our lesson introduces us to the first missionary journey. It began A.D. 46, and lasted for about two years. The story is told in Acts, chs. 13, 14. The second missionary journey began in A.D. 51, and lasted about two years. It is told in chs. 15 : 36 to 18 : 21. The third missionary journey began in A.D. 54, and lasted about four years. The story of that journey ends in ch. 21 : 16. The Apostle Paul thus became the leader in the missionary movement that aimed to make Christianity the religion of the world. One of the greatest books about Paul is called "Saint Paul, the Traveller and the Roman Citizen." He was indeed a great traveler.

THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH

Acts 13 : 1

The first Gentile Church had been formed at Antioch, and it became the center of the missionary work to the Gentile world. Here the disciples had been called Christians for the first time, and here Paul had carried on his first regular ministry. "Antioch continued an important seat of Christianity. After the fall of Jerusalem it became the Christian center for the province of Syria, and ranked with Rome, Constantinople, and Alexandria as a patriarchate. It is now the chief seat of the American Missions to the East, and has again become a great missionary center."

We are introduced in the opening verse of the lesson to the personality of the leaders of the church at Antioch. They are spoken of in general as "prophets and teachers." A prophet is a man who delivers a special message for God. A teacher is one who instructs in the Christian faith. The prophets ranked next to the apostles, Eph. 4 : 11, and were also teachers. The work of the prophet was more like that of a modern preacher or evangelist, but in time this special and peculiar character disappeared. It is interesting to note the names and nationality of these five church leaders. One was from Cyprus, "another a Cyrenian, another a Jew, but from his double name accustomed to mix among non-Jews, one a connection of the Idumæan house of Herod, and Saul the heaven-appointed Apostle to the Gentiles. The list may be deemed in some sort typical of 'all the world,' into which the gospel was now to go forth."

THE ORDAINED MISSIONARIES

Acts 13 : 2, 3

While the leaders of the church were engaged in Christian worship and service, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work

whereunto I have called them." It would appear that these leaders had been in the very act of prayerful consideration. The call came as they "ministered to the Lord, and fasted." They had set aside a definite time for prayer and meditation, for doubtless in their hearts the call of the Spirit was being heard. God's Spirit calls in many ways. It is not necessary for us to think of some audible voice. God made it plain to these early Christians that Barnabas and Saul were suited for missionary service to the Gentiles. Saul must have known something of that "call." When the word came to Ananias to go and visit Saul in his blindness, the Lord had said to him, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel." When Paul was warned to flee from Jerusalem, the Lord said, "Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles." Acts 22 : 21. His call to preach the gospel to the Gentile world was certainly clear to him, and now after prayer and conference the will of God was made known to the leader of the church at Antioch.

A solemn service of prayer and fasting was appointed and at that service the hands of their brethren were laid upon Barnabas and Saul, and they were ordained and commissioned to preach the gospel, not to Jews merely, but to the Gentile world. This was a new departure, and was the beginning of the missionary movement to win the world for Christ. They went out commissioned not only by their brethren, but by the Holy Spirit. They were fellow workers with God.

THE MISSION TO CYPRUS

Acts 13 : 4, 5

It does not appear that Barnabas and Saul were sent to any particular field. Their own choice, however, led them first to the island of Cyprus. It was distant from Seleucia, the seaport of Antioch, some seventy miles. It had a large Jewish population but also many Greeks. "Its coast line measured three hundred and ninety miles, and its length from Cape Dinaretum in the east to Cape Acamas in the west was a hundred and sixty."

The reason for first choosing Cyprus was probably the fact that it had been the home of Barnabas, and there he had had property and doubtless many friends. Ch. 4 : 36. Already Christians had visited Cyprus and there would by this time be a considerable Christian population there. Ch. 11 : 19. It is interesting, too, to remember that the work at Antioch had been started and carried forward by "men of Cyprus and Cyrene." Ch. 11 : 20. In time the people of Antioch would be anxious to pay the debt of gratitude and send messengers of the gospel to the people in Cyprus and Cyrene. We see from this the wonderful way in which loyalty to Christ is repaid. Bread cast upon the waters is found again after many days. Barnabas and Saul were accompanied by a young man as their attendant.

His name was John Mark. John was his Jewish name and Mark his Gentile name. His home was in Jerusalem. His mother, Mary by name, was well-to-do, and her home was noted for its hospitality. He was a cousin of Barnabas, and was the author of the Gospel which bears his name. Acts 12:12; Col. 4:10.

They landed at Salamis, the seaport in Cyprus, and began their work immediately. They seem to have gone from town to town, traveling right across the island from east to west until they came to Paphos, the capital on the western side of the island, about one hundred and ten miles. "Their labor seems to have accomplished little. Apparently, indeed, they were courteously received by reason, doubtless, of the esteem wherewith Barnabas was regarded by his fellow countrymen; at all events, they encountered in their progress through the island none of the hostility which the gospel elsewhere aroused in Jewish breasts. But although there is no evidence of opposition, there is none of success, either. It is not recorded that they won a single convert in the course of their peregrination."

THE MIRACLE AT PAPHOS

Acts 13:6-12

At Paphos, a remarkable thing happened. Paphos was the capital of the island. It was noted for its worship of Venus and was one of the most immortal cities in the world. The governor of the province, Sergius Paulus, had his home in the city. He was a shrewd man, "a man of understanding." He was "not a devout man, not wise enough to do without a wizard, but of an inquiring mind, ready to learn the truth." He had heard of the mission of Barnabas and Saul and brought them before him in order to hear from their own lips the story of the gospel.

In the court of the governor was a sorcerer, a wizard, whose name was Bar-Jesus (son of Jesus), but who went by the name of Elymas, the "wizard" or "sorcerer." He was an astrologer, believing he could read destiny by the stars; a man of intrigue, trading on the superstition of the people. Sorcery was at this time everywhere believed in and practiced. We are not told what Saul said to the governor but it is suggested that Elymas opposed Saul and so interfered with him and his message, trying "to turn aside the proconsul from the faith," that at last Saul's righteous indignation blazed forth. "He looked the charlatan in the face. 'You mass of trickery and rascality! you "son of the devil"! he cried, playing upon his name Bar-Jesus; 'You enemy of all righteousness! will you not stop twisting the "Lord's straight ways"?' There was indeed hot indignation in the apostle's heart, but there was also shame; for in the Jewish impostor's opposition to the gospel he recognized the self-same spirit which had once actuated himself. And he denounced against him the very judgment which he had himself suffered: 'Now, look you, the Lord's hand is

upon you, and you will be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.' And so it came to pass. A mist fell upon the astrologer's eyes, and like the persecutor on the road to Damascus he had to be 'led by the hand.'"

We are not told what happened to Elymas. Doubtless he recovered his sight. We are told however, that "the proconsul, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord." Saul's victory for Christ was won, and the power of the gospel was revealed. From this time on, Saul is called Paul, and he takes the leadership. We do not read "Barnabas and Paul," but "Paul and Barnabas." But Barnabas was a beautiful and kindly Christian and honored Paul for what God had done through him.

THE MISSION TO ASIA MINOR

Acts 13:13-52

This part of Acts, ch. 13, is not printed, though it is part of the entire lesson. It is the connecting link between this lesson and the next.

It is necessary to trace the journeys of Paul on the map. Leaving Paphos, he set sail from Cyprus and landed at Perga, in Pamphylia, a province of Asia Minor. Trace the course of the ship on the map. There John Mark left Paul and Barnabas and returned to his home at Jerusalem. He had either tired of the work or was afraid to follow Paul and Barnabas into the interior of Asia Minor with its rough roads and its highwaymen. We will meet with John Mark later, but the two older men pressed forward without him.

Their first destination was Antioch, in Pisidia. Be careful to distinguish this Antioch from Antioch in Syria, from which they had first started out on their missionary journey. There on the Sabbath they came into the synagogue and after the opening service, the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the ruler of the synagogue, according to the custom, gave an opportunity for anyone to speak. Paul immediately took advantage of the offer and instead of sitting down to speak as the Jews did, he stood up as the Greeks did, and delivered the striking address found in this chapter. Read it through. Ch. 13:16-41. It was a sermon like that of Stephen recorded in ch. 7. Paul asserted that Jesus was the Messiah and that God had raised him from the dead. The people were interested and invited Paul and Barnabas to return the following Sabbath, which they did. Next Sabbath "multitudes" came to the synagogue and the Jews were "filled with jealousy, and contradicted . . . and blasphemed." Paul and Barnabas both spoke out boldly saying that "It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." This pleased the Gentiles, and many were brought into the faith of the gospel. The storm of opposition had broken, however, and Paul and Barnabas were

driven from the city. The story as it closes is very vivid. "But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." There is an old saying, "The suffering of the teacher makes the disciples more courageous," and there grew up in Antioch a joyous Christian life. The captain of an ocean steamship would sooner have a storm than a fog, and in the storm of persecution that broke out in Antioch, the Church grew and prospered.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Name the leaders of the church at Antioch.
2. To what work was God calling Barnabas and Saul?
3. Why did they go first to Cyprus?
4. For what reason did Elymas oppose Paul's message?
5. What results followed the mission to Cyprus?
6. Tell the story of Paul's visit to Antioch in Pisidia.

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 42. How did Jesus Christ encourage us to pray?

A. Jesus Christ encouraged us to pray by his

promise: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15 : 7.

Q. 43. How does God answer our prayers?

A. God answers our prayers, not always as we expect, but as is best for us and for his kingdom.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Distinguish between Antioch in Syria and Antioch in Pisidia.
2. Why were Barnabas and Saul chosen as missionaries?
3. Why is the gospel of Jesus opposed to sorcery and magic?
4. Outline Paul's sermon at Antioch.
5. Why do you think John Mark forsook Paul and Barnabas?
6. How did Barnabas and Paul respond to persecution and opposition?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 33. What is justification?

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

Lesson VII—PAUL IN ICONIUM AND LYSTRA

The Golden Text—"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."—Matt. 4 : 10.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 14: 8-20

For entire lesson, see Acts, ch. 14

8 And at Lys'tra there sat a certain man, impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked.

9 The same heard Paul speaking: who, fastening his eyes upon him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole,

10 Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked.

11 And when the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the speech of Lye-a-o'ni-a, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

12 And they called Bar'na-bas, Ju'pi-ter; and Paul, Mer'cu-ry, because he was the chief speaker.

13 And the priest of Ju'pi-ter whose temple was before the city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the multitudes.

14 But when the apostles, Bar'na-bas and Paul, heard of it, they rent their garments, and sprang forth among the multitude, crying out

15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is:

16 Who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways.

17 And yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness.

18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the multitudes from doing sacrifice unto them.

19 But there came Jews thither from An'ti-och and I-co'ni-um: and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

20 But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and entered into the city: and on the morrow he went forth with Bar'na-bas to Der'be.

The Time—Between A.D. 46 and 48.

The Place—Lystra.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, August 8.....	Paul at Iconium.....	Acts 14 : 1-7.
Tuesday, August 9.....	Paul's Adventures at Lystra.....	Acts 14 : 8-18.
Wednesday, August 10.....	Jewish Opposition Becomes Violent.....	Acts 14 : 19-23.
Thursday, August 11.....	The Return to Antioch.....	Acts 14 : 24-28.
Friday, August 12.....	"I Am the Lord Thy God".....	Ex. 20 : 1-7.
Saturday, August 13.....	"Worship God".....	Rev. 22 : 6-9.
Sunday, August 14.....	"Look Unto Me, and Be Ye Saved".....	Isa. 45 : 18-24.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

8. Lystra. Lystra was a city of Lycaonia, and a Roman colony. Lycaonia ("wolf land") was a desert plain with few trees and little water.

9. Fastening his eyes. A phrase often used of Paul. Acts 13 : 9; 23 : 1. Some people think that Paul had a strained look, a result of his blindness at the time of his conversion.

12. Jupiter, Mercury. Zeus and Hermes, as they were called by the Greeks. Zeus was the king of the gods, of splendid presence, and Hermes was the attendant upon Zeus and renowned for his eloquence.

13. Garlands. The victims for the sacrifice as well as the altar and the priests were adorned with garlands.

THE LESSON STORY

In this lesson the story of Paul's first missionary journey is continued. It is necessary to trace this journey from place to place. In our last lesson Barnabas and Paul left Antioch for Cyprus. They set sail from Seleucia, the seaport of Antioch, and landed at Salamis, the seaport of Cyprus. They then passed overland to Paphos. From there they sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, on the southern shore of Asia Minor, and from there traveled inland to Antioch in Pisidia, from which place they were driven by the persecution which had been stirred up against them. Next we find Paul and Barnabas passing on to Iconium and then to Lystra and Derbe, where they preached the gospel. From Derbe they retraced their steps to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia, and passing again through Pisidia and Pamphylia, they again visited Perga, and sailed from Attalia to Antioch, whence they had started. This missionary journey probably lasted from A.D. 46 to A.D. 48, and during this period the power of the gospel was made manifest, and both Jews and Greeks were admitted to the Christian faith.

THE LAME MAN HEALED

Acts 14 : 8-10

When Paul and Barnabas were persecuted at Iconium, Acts 14 : 1-8, they fled to Lystra, a distance of about twenty miles. It was the end of the Roman royal road and was a garrison town. Although it was a Roman colony, it was far inland and the old ways and the old language still persisted.

There seems to have been no synagogue in Lystra and Paul found his opportunity to speak in the market and other public places. We are not told how long he was in Lystra before the event happened which is recorded in our lesson. Paul was speaking one day as usual, when his eyes fell upon a cripple, a man who had never walked, lame from his birth. Something in his face attracted Paul. It seemed as if the man's faith was revealed in his face. Paul, fastening his eyes upon him, cried out in a loud voice, "Stand upright," and the man immediately leaped up and walked. "The man was a believer and scarcely knew it, and Paul, with his apostolic gifts and yearning for the salvation of men's souls, saw his state. True preachers must recognize faith 'when it is only a light in the face, a gleam in the eye, a new movement in the body.' If we were always on the outlook for faith in others our Christian work would probably be more successful. Whilst the lame man listens to the word he feels power in his soul: and thus he is inwardly led to infer it in his body."

THE DEMONSTRATION AT LYSTRA

Acts 14 : 11-13

The man who was healed was well known and when the people saw the miracle which had taken place, they were astounded and cried out in their own dialect, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men." These were primitive people and they believed that the gods often visited the earth. The old story of how Zeus and Hermes, or Jupiter and Mercury, had been entertained by Baucis and Philemon, belonged to this very locality. The people were familiar with the old story and perhaps they were anxious that they should be as hospitable as Baucis and Philemon had been. Jupiter was the king of the gods and because of his stately and commanding presence, they called Barnabas "Jupiter." Mercury, or Hermes, was the god of eloquence, and naturally, having frequently heard Paul speak, they called him "Mercury."

It would seem that Paul and Barnabas, however, did not know what was going on in the minds of these devoted people, for they were not acquainted with "the speech of Lycaonia," and were not aware of what was occurring until they understood that the oxen with the garlands were to be offered in sacrifice to them. As soon, however, as they knew the meaning of what was about to happen, they were horror-stricken. "They rent their garments,

and sprang forth among the multitude, crying out and saying, *Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is.*"

True religion is spiritual. Christianity condemns all idolatry. It teaches that "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

PAUL PREACHING TO THE PEOPLE

Acts 14: 14-18

When Paul had stopped the sacrifice, he used the opportunity to proclaim to the people the truth about God. He frankly called their gods and their garlands "vain things," and pointed them to "a living God, who made the heaven and the earth." All life comes from him. He is the Life-giver. The questions might be asked: "Why, then, did not God reveal himself to all people? Why did he hide himself? Why was it so difficult to know him?" Paul tried to answer those unasked questions. He said that although God did allow the nations to walk in their own ways, yet through his providence he manifested himself to all people. "And yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness."

The Giver of earth's best gifts is God. Their land was dreary and dry; it was God who sent the rain. "Paul made himself 'all things to all men.' When he preached to the Jews he quoted the Old Testament Scriptures, and the facts which other Jews knew: when he preached to the Athenians, he drew his arguments from the beautifully carved images, the magnificent temples, from history, from literature, from soul and from conscience; here, speaking to a primitive people, he describes God as the Food-giver."

PAUL THE PERSECUTED

Acts 14: 19, 20

Paul and Barnabas were not long permitted even in Lystra to carry on their work in peace. To-day they are praised and to-morrow persecuted. They were not long permitted to enjoy the rewards of their labors. Two things conspired to interrupt their work at Lystra. In the first place, the priest and the temple worshippers of Jupiter would resent

Paul's preaching. He had called their gods and sacrifices "vain things," and had disappointed them when they offered to worship them as gods. In the second place, Jews from Antioch and Iconium had come overland and persuaded the people of Lystra that Paul and Barnabas were deceivers. "Jewish malice was so strong that men of two cities ninety miles apart, continued to persecute, and some of them came one hundred and thirty miles to harm the apostles." What had happened in Antioch and Iconium now happened in Lystra, only in a more terrible form. "They stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead." One day they were ready to worship him. The next day they stoned him. Nothing is said of their treatment of Barnabas, but Paul never forgot that awful day. II Cor. 11: 25. Paul was not dead, however, but only stunned, and as the disciples gathered around him, "he rose up, and entered into the city." A group of dis-



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PAUL AT LYSTRA

ciples seems to have been formed even in Lystra and we know that Timothy, Eunice, and Lois would be of this company, for this was their home. Acts 16: 1 and I Tim. 1: 1, 2. While Paul was courageous in the face of danger, he did not court danger and in the morning he quietly made his way out of Lystra to Derbe, which was about twenty miles farther east, on the very frontier of Galatia and not very far from Tarsus, Paul's own home town. Here they made many disciples and

no one interfered with their work. "The town must have seemed a quiet haven after their turbulent experiences at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra; but, peaceful as it was, their ministry was crowned with large success. The record is brief but eloquent; 'they . . . preached the gospel to that city, and . . . made many disciples.' And one of these was Gaius, who in after days proved a serviceable comrade of the apostle." Acts 20 : 4.

THE RETURN JOURNEY

The account of the conclusion of the first missionary journey is given in Acts 14 : 21-28.

At Derbe the apostles had come to the last limit of their journey. It was a frontier town, and so all that was left them was to retrace their steps. This they did, not merely by way of returning home, but as an opportunity to encourage and confirm in the faith, the disciples they had won. Careless of possible danger, they returned to the very cities where their lives had been imperiled—Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. They not only comforted and confirmed the disciples, but organized the churches, ordaining elders and establishing the work on firm foundations. When they had done this they passed down to the seashore and, sailing from Attalia they reached Antioch in Syria, where they had started out on their missionary journey, and reported to the church there what they had done. "They rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and that he had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles." They had been absent about two years. Doubtless rumors of their work had reached the apostles, and there must have been eager inquiry and great joy at this first great missionary conference of the Christian Church.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Trace on the map Paul's first missionary journey.

Lesson VIII—PAUL PREPARES FOR WORLD CONQUEST

The Golden Text—"But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus."—Acts 15 : 11.

TEXT OF LESSON ACTS 15:36 to 16:5

For entire lesson, see Acts 15:1 to 16:5.

Ch. 15 : 36 And after some days Paul said unto Bar'na-bas, Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare.

37 And Bar'na-bas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pam-phyl'i-a, and went not with them to the work.

39 And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Bar'na-bas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus;

2. How was the gospel message received at Iconium? Acts 14 : 1-7.

3. What miracle did Paul perform at Lystra?

4. Why did the people of Lystra think Paul was Mercury and Barnabas, Jupiter?

5. For what reason did the people of Lystra stone Paul?

6. Why did Paul and Barnabas return again to the cities where they had been in danger of death?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 44. How should we value membership in the Church?

A. We should value membership in the Church as a means of obeying and honoring Christ, of guarding and strengthening our Christian life and of doing good to others.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Select from ch. 14 experiences which may be used to define the Christian faith. See vs. 3, 7, 21, 22, 27.

2. Account for the opposition which is aroused by the preaching of the gospel.

3. Why did the people of Lystra call Barnabas and Paul "gods"?

4. Why was Paul and not Barnabas stoned by the people of Lystra?

5. What was Paul's purpose in revisiting the places where he had preached and been persecuted?

6. What were the results of Paul's first missionary journey?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 34. What is adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God.

40 But Paul chose Si'las, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

41 And he went through Syr'i-a and Ci-li'ci-a, confirming the churches.

* * * * *

Ch. 16 : 1 And he came also to Der'be and to Lys'tra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Tim'o-thy, the son of a Jewess that believed; but his father was a Greek.

2 The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lys'tra and I-co'ni-um.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts: for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

4 And as they went on their way through the

cities, they delivered them the decrees to keep which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Je-ru'sa-lem.

5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

The Time—A.D. 51.

The Places—Antioch and Asia Minor.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, August 15.....	The Council at Jerusalem.....	Acts 15 : 1-6.
Tuesday, August 16.....	Peter's Statement	Acts 15 : 7-11.
Wednesday, August 17.....	The Counsel of James.....	Acts 15 : 13-21.
Thursday, August 18.....	The Council's Decision.....	Acts 15 : 22-29.
Friday, August 19.....	Paul and Timothy.....	Acts 15 : 36 to 16 : 5.
Saturday, August 20.....	A Light to the Nations.....	Isa. 49 : 6b-13.
Sunday, August 21.....	Joy to the World.....	Isa., ch. 35.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

Ch. 15: 37. Who was called Mark. Mark, called also John Mark, was, as we have seen before, a cousin of Barnabas'. Col. 4: 10. He had failed Paul on his first missionary journey. Acts 13: 13.

39. A sharp contention. The words imply a short and bitter controversy. The apostles were not perfect men.

40. Paul chose Silas. Silas and Judas had been the commissioners from the church at Jerusalem to the church at Antioch. Evidently Silas was sympathetic toward Paul's ministry to the Gentiles.

Ch. 16: 1. Timothy. One of Paul's first converts. I Tim. 1: 2. His father was a Greek, his mother a Jewess. Paul wrote to him the two Epistles to Timothy found in the New Testament.

4. Delivered them the decrees. These were the actions of the council at Jerusalem acknowledging the Apostolic authority of Paul and the right of Gentiles to become Christians without submitting first to the ceremonies of the Jews.

THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 15 : 36-41

After Paul and Barnabas attended the council at Jerusalem, Acts 15: 1-35, they returned to Antioch. The council at Jerusalem was held about A.D. 50, and if they started off on their second journey about A.D. 51, their stay at Antioch would have been at least a year. Paul was always impatient to visit his converts, and yearned over them with loving concern. He carried in his heart "anxiety for all the churches." II Cor. 11: 28. It would seem that their original intention was to go over the ground covered in their first journey. Their wish was to visit the churches to "see how they fare."

Their purpose, however, was not carried out, for a disagreement arose over John Mark. Naturally Barnabas, who was his cousin, desired to take Mark with them, but Paul was not so minded. On their first journey Mark had played them false and had returned to his home when they reached Perga. Acts 13: 13. We are not told the reason for Mark's failure. Either he was afraid of the hardships to

be encountered in the interior or he longed for the comforts of his home. At any rate it seems that Mark failed, and Paul was disappointed in him. Paul was not willing to try him a second time. "Our Lord had said that he who had put his hand to the plow and had turned back was not fit for the Kingdom of God; and Paul evidently thought that John Mark had done what Jesus so strongly reprobated. Paul was wrong, however; John Mark certainly failed him once, and perhaps brought discredit on the disciple company by so doing; but Barnabas did right to try him again, and Paul in the end came to see that his fellow apostle had been in the right, and afterwards received the services of the man whom he here distrusted. Mark was at Babylon with Peter, I Peter 5: 13, and then at Rome with Paul, Col. 4: 10, and about to leave it for Asia Minor. The last glimpse of him is given by Paul, when the apostle asks Timothy to come to Rome and bring Mark with him, who, he says, is 'useful to me for ministering.'" II Tim. 4: 11.

Barnabas was resolved upon taking Mark, and Paul was just as determined not to take him. The outcome was that "there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus; but Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord." The people of Antioch seem to have sided with Paul, and after prayer they sent him and Silas off to their labors in Syria and Cilicia. Barnabas took Mark and went to Cyprus where he and Mark and Paul had first labored together. Paul and Silas began their new work among the churches where the Jewish element was strong, and to the Gentiles of these churches they brought the message of the Jerusalem council.

PAUL AND TIMOTHY

Acts 16: 1-4

Paul went from Antioch through Syria and Cilicia, to Derbe, which had been the terminus of his first missionary journey. His route, however, lay northward and, passing through his own city of Tar-

sus perhaps, he made his way across the plains of Cilicia "to the bleak table-land of Lycaonia" by one of the passes through the Taurus range, probably through the celebrated pass called "The Cilician Gates." During this trip he "confirmed" the churches. These churches were probably founded by Paul during those obscure years which were passed when Paul was at Tarsus before taking up his work at Antioch.

At Lystra Paul's greatest interest was in Timothy. Timothy was one of Paul's earliest converts. His father was a Greek, but his mother was a Jewess, and he had been well trained by his mother and his grandmother in the Old Testament Scriptures. II Tim. 3 : 15. The church at Lystra had called him into service and had ordained him as an elder. I Tim. 1 : 18; 4 : 14. He was a young man and "was well reported of by the brethren." Paul was eager to have him accompany him on his missionary travels, for although Silas was his companion, "Paul liked youth and needed a young man to take the place of John Mark. It was an apostle's duty to train a second generation for Christ." Having a Greek father and a Jewish mother the social standing of Timothy was doubtful, for many Jews held that a marriage between a Gentile and a Jew was not legal. So Paul took Timothy and silenced all criticism by having him conform to all the rites of the Jews. Timothy then became well equipped to minister both to Jews and Greeks and for many years was associated with Paul in the gospel ministry. "He was his messenger to the Corinthian Church, I Cor. 4 : 17, and to the church at Thessalonica. I Thess. 3 : 2-6. He was at Rome with Paul. Phil. 1 : 1; 2 : 19; Col. 1 : 1; Philem. 1. He suffered for the truth. Heb. 13 : 23."

PAUL'S MESSAGE TO THE CHURCHES

Acts 16 : 4, 5

Paul was not only kindly disposed to the Jews but loyal also to the Gentiles who had been gathered into the Church. His treatment of Timothy shows that he had no intention of hurting unnecessarily the feelings of the Jews. On the other hand he was unyielding in his belief that Gentiles might be received immediately into Christian fellowship.

The decrees which had been agreed upon by the apostles at Jerusalem Paul carried with him and delivered faithfully to the churches which he visited. The result was that the churches "were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily." These two results belong to every true missionary effort—confirmation in the faith of the gospel, followed by the desire to bring others to Christ. The word "strengthened" in the faith is very interesting. It means "made solid," "made firm." As a result of Paul's visit the churches were made strong and robust, and, instead of wavering in their beliefs they were made resolute, rejoicing in their faith, and reaching out to win others.

PREPARING FOR WORLD CONQUEST

In order to conquer the world one must not only be willing to go forth to conquer, but must have the means by which he can conquer. Paul was well equipped. He possessed the Spirit of God by whom he worked. It was not the power of Paul, but the power of Christ in Paul which made conquest possible. Christ was his Captain, and he could do all things through Christ. In the second place Paul was in possession of a great gospel. He had a true message. The council at Jerusalem had decided in favor of Paul's interpretation of the gospel, and he was free to ask all men to come to Christ, and to ask them to come just as they were.

It is a wonderful thing to have a compelling, conquering gospel, and we must see to it that the door of entrance into the Christian faith, and into the Christian Church, is as wide as the invitation of Jesus when he said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Tell the story of the council at Jerusalem.
2. What was the decision of the council at Jerusalem?
3. Why did Paul refuse to take Mark with him?
4. What companions had Paul on his second missionary journey?
5. What was Paul's relationship to Timothy?
6. What was Paul's special mission to the churches visited in the lesson?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 45. What are the chief duties of a member of the Church?

A. The chief duties of a member of the Church are faithfulness to Christ in daily life, regular attendance on the services of the Church, support of its work by prayer and offerings, and effort to extend its influence.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What was the controversy that occasioned the council meeting at Jerusalem?
2. Under what conditions were Gentiles to be received into the Christian Church?
3. Do you think Paul or Barnabas was right in the controversy over John Mark?
4. Why did Paul wish for the companionship of Timothy?
5. What do we know of Timothy's life and work?
6. Trace the route taken by Paul in his second journey from Antioch.

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 35. What is sanctification?

A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

FROM ASIA TO EUROPE

The Golden Text—"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house."—Acts 16 : 31.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 16: 6-18

For entire lesson, see Acts 15: 36 to 16: 18.

6 And they went through the region of Phryg'i-a and Ga-la'tia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in A'si-a;

7 And when they were come over against My'si-a, they assayed to go into Bi-thyn'i-a; and the Spirit of Je'sus suffered them not;

8 And passing by My'si-a, they came down to Tro'as.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Mac-e-do'ni-a standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Mac-e-do'ni-a, and help us.

10 And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Mac-e-do'ni-a, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Setting sail therefore from Tro'as, we made a straight course to Sam-o-thra'ce, and the day following to Ne-ap'o-lis;

12 And from thence to Phi-lip'pi, which is a city of Mac-e-do'ni-a, the first of the district, a Roman colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days.

13 And on the sabbath day we went forth with-

out the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.

14 And a certain woman named Lyd'i-a, a seller of purple, of the city of Thy-a-ti'ra, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

16 And it came to pass, as we were going to the place of prayer, that a certain maid having a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying.

17 The same following after Paul and us cried out, saying, These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you the way of salvation.

18 And this she did for many days. But Paul, being sore troubled, turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Je'sus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

The Time—A.D. 51-53.

The Places—Asia Minor and Philippi.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, August 22.....	The Vision.....	Acts 16 : 6-10.
Tuesday, August 23.....	First Fruits in Europe.....	Acts 16 : 11-18.
Wednesday, August 24.....	Paul's Prayer for the Philippians.....	Phil. 1 : 1-11.
Thursday, August 25.....	The Philippians' Care for Paul.....	Phil. 4 : 10-18.
Friday, August 26.....	A Pioneer Missionary.....	Rom. 15 : 15-21.
Saturday, August 27.....	Jonah, the Missionary.....	Jonah 3 : 1-9.
Sunday, August 28.....	The Lord, Our Helper.....	Psalms 30.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

6. In Asia. Not Asia Minor, but the Province of Asia, in Asia Minor, which included the districts of Mysia, Lydia, and Caria. Its capital was Ephesus. It bordered on the Ægean Sea.

9. A vision. Paul and his companions were seeking guidance and were given it in this way. In the vision Paul saw "A man, a certain Macedonian."

10. We sought to go. The change to the first person "we," is important. Luke here joins Paul's party. He was a physician and a Gentile. Col. 4 : 14; Acts 20 : 5-15; 21 : 1-18; 27 : 1-28, for Luke's further movements.

12. A colony. Philippi was founded by Philip, father of Alexander the Great. After the great battle between Brutus and Anthony and Augustus, it became one of the proudest of Roman colonies.

14. The city of Thyatira. In the province of

Asia, noted for its dyeing works. One of the seven churches of the Revelation was located there.

16. Spirit of divination. At Delphi there was a priestess of Apollo who was called "the pythoness," supposed to foretell the future. This slave girl was "a wandering pythoness."

THE SHUTTING OF THE DOORS

Acts 16: 6-8

It is very important to keep a close watch on the map as we read these verses. They are full of geographical information. Paul had traveled over land from Antioch to Derbe and to Lystra; and probably intended visiting the churches he had organized in Pisidia and Pamphylia, and then passing on into the Province of Asia, perhaps following the great highways to the city of Ephesus. Instead of taking the southern route, they passed farther north

through the central provinces of Galatia and Phrygia. The reason given for the change of route is that they were "forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia." We must keep in mind that "Asia" means the coast province of Mysia, Lydia, and Caria. Keeping their northern route until they reached the border of Mysia, they intended to turn north into the province of Bithynia. Again we read that they were hindered. "The Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." Being thus led, they came as by a direct road to the town of Troas, called usually Alexandria Troas, some distance south of ancient Troy and the seaport between Asia Minor and Europe. Paul, who was accompanied by both Silas and Timothy, was miraculously led. The doors they expected to enter shut in their faces. "The Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." God was leading them on to a larger and greater work. Doubtless God led them in a perfectly natural way. David Smith suggests that Paul's health made it necessary for him to avoid the summer heat of the more southern climate. Whatever means were used, however, Paul was convinced that the leading was not of himself but of the Spirit of God. One of the ways God leads us is to close the doors of our own choosing.

THE OPENING OF THE DOORS

Acts 16: 9-11

How long Paul lingered in Troas we are not told. It was a Roman colony, and there Paul and his companions would see upon the streets the people of two continents. In that cosmopolitan city, Paul saw the citizens of both Asia and Europe, and with wistful eyes he must have looked off toward the land of Macedonia and longed for the conquest of that, to him, unknown continent. The leading of the Spirit of God, too, would make him sensitive and alert. What was the meaning of such strange leading? Did God wish him to press on across the sea? Such questions filled his soul, and doubtless he and his companions debated what course should be followed. In the night the answer came. "A vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us." The expression, "a man of Macedonia," may be better translated "a man, a certain Macedonian," and would suggest that it was some definite person whom Paul saw in the vision. However that may be, the vision brought definiteness to their plans, and immediately they sought to go forth to Macedonia. Notice the words, "We sought to go." At this point in the story, Paul is joined by Luke, the writer of the book of The Acts. Paul later calls him "the beloved physician," and doubtless he often ministered to Paul. Nothing seems to have been done at Troas, for immediately Paul, with Silas, Timothy, and Luke, passed over into Macedonia by way of the island of Samothrace, landing at Neapolis, a seaport town on the mainland of Europe.

This is one of the most important events in the history of Christianity. It meant the introduction of the gospel into Europe, for by entering Macedonia, Paul was entering as through an open door into Europe.

CHRISTIANITY IN EUROPE

Acts 16: 12

Paul and his companions lost no time in reaching the central city of Macedonia. Philippi was only ten miles from Neapolis, and there the missionaries took up their abode. Philippi was "a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony." Paul sought out great cities. He was a general, and understood the importance of strategic centers, and Philippi was a great cosmopolitan city where people from all the world met and mingled, and there he was under Roman protection. Dr. Schaff says: "A Roman colony was a miniature of the imperial city, a portion of Rome itself transplanted to the provinces. Some of the inhabitants, being colonists and the descendants of colonists, were Roman citizens, and were still enrolled in one of the tribes, and possessed the privilege of voting at Rome. In these cities the Roman law was scrupulously observed; and they were governed by their own senate and magistrates, and not by the governor of the province in which the colony happened to be situated."

If Paul could lay the foundations of a church in Philippi, he could go forth into other parts with greater confidence.

THE CONVERSION OF LYDIA

Acts 16: 13-15

In towns where they were not permitted to have synagogues, the Jews had "places of prayer." These places were open to the sky and were usually beside the seashore or a river for purposes of ceremonial washings. We read in one of the psalms that the Jews worshiped "by the rivers of Babylon." To this place of prayer by the riverside, Paul and his companions came on the Sabbath. They still were loyal to their Jewish habits of worship, and the Sabbath gave them leisure and opportunity. The text suggests that Paul did not know for sure that a place of prayer was there. The verse reads, "Where we supposed there was a place of prayer." He was not disappointed, for there he found a group of women. The meeting was quite informal, and in a short time Paul would have an opportunity to interpret the gospel. Among the women was one called Lydia, a woman of distinction. She belonged to Thyatira, a city in the province of Asia, a convert to Judaism. She "worshipped God." She was probably wealthy and was a dealer in the purple garments for which Thyatira was noted. She quickly responded to Paul's message. God opened her heart, and she and her household were immediately baptized. So sincere was her interest that she constrained Paul and his companions to accept

her hospitality, and her home became their headquarters.

Some one has said that Lydia quickly showed signs of being a devoted Christian. She evidenced an open heart, an open mind, an open hand, and an open house. It is impossible for us to estimate the extent of her household, but it is interesting to know that her influence led those with whom she was associated in her home quietly to follow her into the Christian life.

THE SOOTHSAYER MAID

Acts 16: 16-18

There are no marks of time given us, and we are at a loss to know how long Paul remained at Philippi. He and his companions still continued, however, to teach and preach and pray by the riverside. Going and coming from that sacred place day by day they were followed by a young girl, who had "a spirit of divination." She was a poor, half-insane slave girl. "The apostle was in Europe, not far from the most celebrated seats of Greek worship. At Delphi a priestess of Apollo, 'the pythoness' she was called, was supposed to be inspired to foretell the future. This girl was a wandering pythoness. The Greek words say that she had a 'python,' which is translated 'a spirit of divination.' She was a slave, troubled by some kind of hysteria, and instead of being cared for and cured, her masters found that they could make money by interpreting her incoherent sayings. What led her in her maddened misery to cry after the apostles it is impossible to say, but often stray yearnings, leading to such crying out as is recorded, do pass through such minds as hers." She kept following and crying after Paul and his companions for many days, saying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you the way of salvation." She kept this up until Paul was "sore troubled," and one day as she followed, he "turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour."

Our next lesson will outline the consequences of this notable healing. In healing the slave girl, Paul revealed his tenderness and sympathy to her in her great need, and also the power of the gospel to redeem and save from every form of sin and

error. It was not the power of Paul that wrought the miracle, but the power of Jesus. The apostles worked and spoke only in the name of Jesus Christ.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Fill in an outline map with the places mentioned in this lesson.
2. How did God guide Paul? How does he guide us?
3. How did Paul recognize "the man of Macedonia"?
4. Why was Philippi so important a city?
5. What evidence did Lydia give that she had become a Christian?
6. Tell the story of the maid whom Paul healed.

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 46. Why is that branch of the Church to which we belong called Presbyterian?

A. That branch of the Church to which we belong is called Presbyterian, because it is governed by presbyters or elders.

Q. 47. What do we mean by a presbytery?

A. By a presbytery we mean the presbyters or elders, equal in authority and organized to have charge of the Church in a certain district.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Trace Paul's second missionary journey as far as Philippi.

2. What led Paul to begin work in Europe?

3. Why do we use the words, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us," as a missionary appeal?

4. Describe what is meant by "a place of prayer."

5. Who was Lydia? How was she led to accept Christ?

6. Compare the salvation of Lydia with the saving of the soothsayer maid.

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 36. What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A. The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

Lesson X—FROM PHILIPPI TO ATHENS

Golden Text—"The angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Ps. 34: 7.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 16: 19-34

For entire lesson, see Acts 16: 19 to 17: 15.

19 But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they laid hold on Paul and

Si'las, and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers,

20 And when they had brought them unto the magistrates, they said, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

21 And set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to beat them with rods.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 But about midnight Paul and Si'las were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them;

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the jailor, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Si'las,

30 And brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.

32 And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately.

34 And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.

The Time—A.D. 51-53.

The Place—Macedonia.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, August 29.....	The Philippian Jailer.....	Acts 16: 19-34.
Tuesday, August 30.....	At Thessalonica.....	Acts 17: 1-9.
Wednesday, August 31.....	At Berea.....	Acts 17: 10-15.
Thursday, September 1.....	Ministering Spirits.....	Heb. 1: 7-14.
Friday, September 2.....	Paul's Method with the Thessalonians.....	I Thess. 2: 1-12.
Saturday, September 3.....	Reflecting the Gospel.....	I Thess., ch. 1.
Sunday, September 4.....	Kept in All Thy Ways.....	Psalms 91: 1-7.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

19. **Marketplace.** The center of social life and the place of public meetings. Since Philippi was a Roman colony, the magistrates would dispense justice in the market place.

20. **Being Jews.** The Jews were intensely hated by the Romans.

22. **Beat them with rods.** A Roman punishment. The lictors always carried an ax tied up in a bundle of rods. See II Cor. 11: 25.

24. **The inner prison.** Probably underground, dark and damp. The stocks were "wooden frames" with five holes for feet, arms, and neck. In this case the feet only were inclosed.

27. **Kill himself.** Roman jailers were selected from the lowest and often from the criminal class, and neglect of duty meant death.

29. **Sprang in.** Probably he leaped into the dungeon, eager both to see that his prisoners were there, and to beg for help and for mercy.

ested in her humiliation and had no pity for her. When they discovered that she had become normal, they were angry. They discovered that "the hope of their gain was gone." In their anger they laid hold of Paul and Silas, and dragged them before the magistrate in the market place, or public square. Being a Roman colony, Philippi was modeled in government upon Rome and had two "magistrates." When asked for the reason why they had brought Paul and Silas to the magistrates, the slave masters replied, "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city." They did not charge them with having healed the demoniac girl. That would not have justified their arrest. They charged Paul and Silas with being Jews, and consequently teaching Jewish doctrines which were contrary to Roman customs and ideals. In a word, they were charged with being disturbers of the peace. Jews had been expelled by Claudius from Rome and the Roman magistrates were sensitive, knowing that their positions were at stake if they allowed Jewish disorders to take place in the city.

RELIGION AND BUSINESS

Acts 16 : 19-21

The slave girl with the "spirit of divination" had brought in a large revenue to her masters. She acted as a medium, a soothsayer, a fortune teller. Her strange, wild ways made her valuable as a business enterprise. Her masters were not inter-

PAUL AND SILAS IN PRISON

Acts 16: 22-24

The magistrates seem to have been borne along by the angry mob. It is always difficult to withstand the crowd. They did not even allow Paul and

Silas to defend themselves. They stripped them of their clothes and commanded that they be beaten with rods. In his own account of his trials and persecutions, Paul says in II Cor. 11: 23-25: "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep." After having been terribly beaten, Paul and Silas were delivered over to the jailer, who was more harsh even than required. He cast them into the "inner prison." It was probably a dungeon, below the ground, dark and damp. To be doubly sure, they were not only placed in the "inner prison," but their feet were placed in the "stocks," so that they could not move. Imagine their terrible pain and the awful loneliness and suffering they were called upon to endure! "The cell in which he confined them was not like that of one of our modern jails, but resembled rather such a damp, dark dungeon as we sometimes see among the ruins of a feudal castle in the Old World. It was a pestilential place, from which the light was excluded, and in which the chains rusted on the prisoners' limbs, while the nervus, or stocks, was a frame made sometimes of wood, sometimes of iron, with holes into which the legs, and occasionally also the arms and even the neck of the unfortunate victim, were stretched and confined. Think, then, of these two noble men, with their feet shackled, and their backs all bleeding from the blows of the lictors' rods, consigned to a close, cold, dismal den, fitter for a wild beast's lair than the abode of human beings, and you will have some idea of what Paul means when, writing the Thessalonians, he speaks of his being 'shamefully treated . . . at Philippi.'"



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THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER

THE PRISON DOORS OPENED

Acts 16: 25, 26

Paul and Silas, however, were not discouraged. They had the spirit of the soldiers on the march, in the recent World War, who called to one another in the dark and the danger, "Are we downhearted?" and received the ringing answer, "No!"

God gave them "songs in the night." We can hear the strains through all the centuries, and they bud as cheerful and trustful, whatever befalls. Surely Christian faith never is more noble when it triumphs over circumstances, and brings praises from lips which, if sense had its way would wail and groan. 'This is the victory that hath overcome the world.' The true anæsthetic is trust in God. No wonder that the baser sort of prisoners—and base enough they probably were—'were listening to them,' for such sounds had never been heard there before." Suddenly, without a moment's notice, the shock of a mighty earthquake was felt, and the prison doors were opened and the prisoners freed from their chains.

THE CONVERTED JAILER

Acts 16: 27-31

We have not gained a very good opinion of the jailer. He had not been kind, but cruel, to his prisoners. He had neglected to bathe their bleeding backs, and had been unnecessarily harsh with them. Doubtless he slept where he could command the entrance to the prison, and when he discovered the open doors and the prisoners all free, he drew his sword, ready to take his own life, knowing that the death penalty would be meted out to him for failure while on duty. Paul, however, by a word stayed his hand and allayed his fears. "Do thyself no harm," he said, "for we are all here." Suicide is the refuge of cowards and of those who have nothing to live for. Calling for a light the jailer imme-

diately sought out Paul and Silas, and, trembling and in great fear, he fell at their feet, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The man had suddenly been brought face to face with God. He may have known something of Paul's message, but it is enough to know that God can speak to the heart without human language. He was afraid, and fear as well as love draws men to God. He wished to be saved not from his superiors or his government, but from his sin, as Paul's answer shows. Paul went straight to the heart of his question when he said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." It is a short, simple answer. "See how little it takes to secure salvation. But see how much it takes; for the hardest thing of all is to be content to accept it as a gift, 'without money and without price.' Many people have listened to sermons all their lives, and still have no clear understanding of the ways of salvation. Alas that so often the divine simplicity and brevity of Paul's answer are darkened by a multitude of irrelevant words and explanations which explain nothing!" Paul's words should be read, "Believe on the Lord Jesus."

THE TEST OF A CHRISTIAN

Acts 16: 32-34

The story of the conversion of the jailer is complete. He, too, like Lydia, opened the door of his heart. He was ready to accept and obey instantly. Notice how the way of the Christian life is outlined. (1) The necessity of faith. Paul says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus." (2) In order to have faith the truth must be understood. Paul immediately took the jailer and "spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house." (3) The evidence of a changed life. He was penitent. He took the men who had been scourged and whom he had neglected, and bathed them. (4) He was immediately baptized, and thus publicly witnessed to his faith. (5) His life was filled with new joy and hope. "And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God." The true test of conversion is a changed life. Paul himself says that a Christian is a "new creature." He is a "new man." It was certainly true that when the jailer gave himself to Jesus, he became a totally different person. He became kind and sympathetic and helpful.

The lesson printed in the Quarterly ends with the conversion of the jailer, but the story does not end and should be followed through to the conclusion of the chapter.

In after years Philippi always held a high place in the affections of the apostle. His tenderest and friendliest epistle is the epistle to the church at Philippi. Again and again he received not only encouragement but financial help from the members of that church. "His visit to Philippi had been brief, but the friendships made there were among

the truest and most delightful of Paul's life; for when we read his letter to the members of the church in that city, written perhaps ten years later, we shall find that he addresses them in more endearing terms than he uses to any other correspondents. He could always depend on their loyalty to him. They are his 'beloved, his joy and crown.' He would receive nothing from the men of Corinth or of Ephesus for his services, but he prized the supplies which were sent to him from Philippi. The Christians there lay nearest to his heart, and received his most sacred experiences in the confidence of his affection." In Philippi Paul bore witness both to the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings and the power of his resurrection.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Why did the owners of the slave girl resent her being cured?
2. What charge did they bring against Paul and Silas?
3. Why was the imprisonment of Paul and Silas illegal?
4. For what reason did the jailer wish to kill himself?
5. What proof of the jailer's change of heart is given in the lesson?
6. Why did Paul and Silas refuse their freedom when offered it?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 48. Who are the officers of the Presbyterian Church?

A. The officers of the Presbyterian Church are ministers, ruling elders, and deacons.

Q. 49. What is a minister?

A. A minister is one who is called of God and set apart by the Church to preach the Word and to administer the sacraments, and, when he is set over a particular church, he is called the pastor, or bishop.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Why in this lesson do we hear nothing of Luke nor of Timothy?

2. Why did the magistrates deny Paul and Silas a fair trial?

3. Does God always answer prayer?

4. What did the jailer mean by being "saved"?

5. What rights did Paul and Silas have as Roman citizens?

6. What permanent work did Paul leave behind him at Philippi?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 37. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

A. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves, till the resurrection.

PAUL IN ATHENS

The Golden Text—"In him we live, and move, and have our being."—Acts 17 : 28.

TEXT OF LESSON, ACTS 17:16-31

For entire lesson, see Acts 17:16-34.

16 Now while Paul waited for them at Ath'ens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld the city full of idols.

17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the market-place every day with them that met him.

18 And certain also of the Ep-i-cu-re'an and Sto'ic philosophers encountered him. And some said, What would this babbler say? others, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached Je'sus and the resurrection.

19 And they took hold of him, and brought him unto the Ar-e-op'a-gus, saying, May we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by thee?

20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

21 (Now all the Ath-en'i-ans and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.)

22 And Paul stood in the midst of the Ar-e-op'a-gus, and said,

Ye men of Ath'ens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious.

23 For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, To AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you.

24 The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth unto all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us:

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29 Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man.

30 The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent:

31 Inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

The Time—A.D. 52.

The Place—Athens.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, September 5.....	Paul in Athens.....	Acts 17 : 22-34.
Tuesday, September 6.....	The Maker of Worlds.....	John 1 : 1-5.
Wednesday, September 7.....	The Everlasting God.....	Isa. 40 : 18-26.
Thursday, September 8.....	The Folly of Idolatry.....	Isa. 44 : 9-20.
Friday, September 9.....	Prophecy Fulfilled.....	Luke 4 : 16-21.
Saturday, September 10.....	Sowing the Seed.....	Matt. 13 : 1-9.
Sunday, September 11.....	Sound Wisdom.....	Prov. 3 : 13-23.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

18. **Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.** The two schools of Greek thought. The Epicureans were lovers of pleasure. They disbelieved in any future life. The Stoics were more moral, but believed that a good life meant merely self-control. **Babbler.** A word with a sting in it. "Seed-picker." A dealer in triflers. A talker about little things.

19. **Areopagus.** A name referring either to Mars' Hill or to the supreme court which met there. In this place probably the hill itself.

21. **The Athenians.** The people of Athens. The seat of learning, of science, art, and philosophy. They were interested in Paul because he taught something "new."

28. **Your own poets.** Paul was acquainted with Greek poets. He was able to quote to the Athenians from their own literature. The poet quoted was perhaps Aratus of Tarsus, or Cleanthes.

PAUL AT ATHENS

Acts 17 : 16-18

Acts 17 : 1-15, which comes between the last lesson and this, should be read.

Paul was alone in Athens. Luke was at Philippi. Timothy and Silas were still at Berea, and while Paul was waiting for their coming he had time and leisure to see Athens. "It was the city of Athena, goddess of skill and wisdom. All Hellenic art and story and worship and thought centered there. For

what it was it stood peerless, supreme. Beautiful for situation, and adorned beyond the rivalry of all later ages, of vast intellectual prestige, of a never-satisfied mental curiosity—it was 'the eye of Greece,' and it is the wonder of time." Since Paul had nothing to occupy his time during the day, and was free to teach and preach, he reasoned every day in the synagogue and in the market places with those who met him. In this way he met with certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers who were interested and amused by what Paul said. It seemed to them that he had brought to Athens two new gods, one was "Jesus" and the other was "the resurrection," or as the Greeks called them "Jesus" and "Anastasis," a pair of new gods. "He who introduced a god into Athens was counted a public benefactor," and although they called Paul a "babbler," a "seed-picker," "a dealer in trifling things," they nevertheless wanted to give him a hearing.

THE AREOPAGUS

Acts 17 : 19-22

The Areopagus was a name given to Mars' Hill, and also to the Supreme Court, or Council, that met on Mars' Hill. On this hill, Paul was given a public hearing where crowds of people could hear him. He was taken to the place where philosophers and poets met and mingled. The Epicureans and the Stoics combined like the Sadducees and Pharisees of Jesus' time, to test and examine his new teaching. The people of Philippi and Thessalonica were hostile and opposed to the gospel. The people of Berea were kindly disposed, but Athens was merely curious. The people there "spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing."

PAUL'S GREAT SERMON

Acts 17 : 22-31

Athens was full of idols. It had been said that there were more idols than men in Athens, and while Paul had wandered through the city, his heart was provoked when he thought of such a great city given over to idolatry. V. 16. The people were indifferent and curious and not interested, save in what was new and novel. Paul, however, was a scholar, well-read and finely trained, and he began his sermon with fine tact and quiet reserve. He began as Demosthenes would begin, "Ye men of Athens." He told them that he had been over the city and discovered that they were "very religious." The word he uses may mean either "superstitious" or "religious." They were more interested in the things of the spirit than other men, but they had

no real religious light. They were fearful of the gods, believing in omens and wizards and mysteries. Among all the idols and altars found in the city, Paul had discovered one altar that greatly interested him. It had an inscription, "To an Unknown God," and Paul declared that this unknown God whom they worshiped in ignorance, was the true God of whom he wished to speak. The word "Unknown" is the word from which we get our word "Agnostic." Paul knew of course that this was not what the Athenians meant by the inscription, but they were learned enough to follow the wise and acute interpretation. From this point Paul proceeded to interpret God, the real and the true God. He made known to them what was dimly recognized in the altar to "An Unknown God."

The sermon was a profound yet simple argument. (1) He began by saying that the true God was



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MARS' HILL, ATHENS

the Creator of all things. He was God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. No temple can be his abiding place and he needs no food nor drink, for he created and made all things.

(2) Not only is God the Creator but he preserves and orders all things. He is the Guide of men and of nations. He makes history, and history runs to a spiritual goal. Men are religious at heart, and are everywhere seeking after God. This is natural, for "He is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." At this point Paul denounced idolatry in all its forms. If we are like God, then God is spiritual and cannot be represented in stone or gold or silver. "Since therefore we are God's offspring and have life and breath, it is absurd to believe the Godhead to be in dumb stone or silver, for it is unquestionable that our life is given to us by the highest life. Judge the Father by the child.

The attack on pagan worship is as delicate as it is penetrating. Man is of too lofty lineage to accept the degraded and degrading deities of the popular mythology for his deities, and the delicacy of the reproach is increased by the use of the plural, 'we ought not.'

(3) God is not only Creator and Preserver, but he is Judge of all. In times past he has been merciful and has "overlooked" the "times of ignorance," but now he demands righteousness and repentance, and in sending Jesus, "the man whom he hath ordained," he has made judgment sure and given "assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." The fact of retribution is understood by every human heart. "The wages of sin is death." The great sin of the world was the crucifixion of Christ and now that Jesus is alive, penalty is sure where there is no penitence.

THE EFFECT OF THE SERMON

Acts 17 : 32-34

These verses are not printed, but they are important, for they show the different ways in which Paul's sermon was received.

The people followed him in his interesting and intellectual argument until he came to the resurrection of Jesus. There they would follow no farther. Many in his curious audience "mocked," that is, by word and gesture they ridiculed the preacher and laughed at his belief in the resurrection. Some, however, were not ready so lightly to dismiss Paul's testimony. We have only a few notes of the sermon, and Paul was too clear in his thinking and too convincing in his argument to be treated with contempt. A few believed, and among them a notable woman, Damaris, and one of the members of the Areopagus, Dionysius. No Christian church seems to have been at Athens and Paul "went out from among them." These three classes are in every audience: "Mockers! procrastinators! converts! So it was then. So it is still every time the gospel is faithfully proclaimed. And perhaps from each of the classes some of the converts may have come to prove that the gospel is 'the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.'

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What treatment did Paul receive at Thessalonica?
2. Why were the people of Berea more noble than those of Thessalonica?
3. What was the attitude of the people of Athens toward religion?
4. Explain the meaning of the inscription "To an Unknown God."
5. Outline Paul's sermon to the Athenians.
6. What was the effect of Paul's preaching?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 50. What are the governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church?

A. The governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church are the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly.

Q. 51. What is the session of a church?

A. The session consists of the pastor and the ruling elders of that church.

Q. 52. What is the duty of the session?

A. The duty of the session is to receive and dismiss members, to watch over and promote their spiritual welfare, and, in general, to direct the whole work of a church.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Trace Paul's journey from Philippi to Athens.
2. Locate Paul's companions—Luke, Silas, and Timothy—in ch. 17.
3. Who were the Epicureans and the Stoics, and what did they teach?
4. What did Paul mean by saying that the Athenians were "very religious"?
5. What was Paul's purpose in his sermon?
6. Was his sermon a success or a failure? Why?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 38. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?

A. At the resurrection, believers, being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

Lesson XII—ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

(A Temperance Lesson)

The Golden Text—"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."—I Cor. 10 : 31.

TEXT OF LESSON, I COR. 10: 23-33; 3: 16, 17

Ch. 10 : 23 All things are lawful; but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful; but not all things edify.

24 Let no man seek his own, but *each* his neighbor's good.

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake;

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If one of them that believe not biddeth you

to a feast, and ye are disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake.

28 But if any man say unto you, This hath been offered in sacrifice, eat not, for his sake that showed it, and for conscience' sake:

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but the other's; for why is my liberty judged by another conscience?

30 If I partake with thankfulness, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

32 Give no occasion of stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the church of God:

33 Even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the *profit* of the many, that they may be saved.

* * * * *

Ch. 3: 16 Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, September 12.....	The Law of Liberty.....	I Cor. 10 : 23-33.
Tuesday, September 13.....	Abstinence for the Sake of Others.....	I Cor., ch. 8.
Wednesday, September 14.....	An Ancient Evil.....	Isa. 28 : 1-8.
Thursday, September 15.....	The Foe Described.....	Ps. 10 : 1-12.
Friday, September 16.....	Victory Assured.....	Psalms 46.
Saturday, September 17.....	For the Gospel's Sake.....	I Cor. 9 : 19-27.
Sunday, September 18.....	God's Goodness.....	Psalms 65.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

Ch. 10: 23. Edify. The Greek word means "to build up." It refers to the building up of Christian character.

25. In the shambles. The general meat market. If a Christian bought meat in the open market, no one could suspect him of favoring idolatry.

28. Offered in sacrifice. When attention was called to the fact that meat had been offered in sacrifice, it raised the question of conscience, for no sanction could be given to idolatry.

32. Occasion of stumbling. Paul means, of course, in regard to unimportant matters and thing which are morally indifferent. Acts 24 : 16; Phil. 1 : 16. **The church of God.** The words refer to the Christian Church. The Christian owes an obligation to Jew and Greek and fellow Christian.

Ch. 3: 16. Know ye not. A phrase much used in the epistle. Chs. 5 : 6; 6 : 2, 9, 15; 9 : 13, 24. It is an appeal to the Christian common sense.

17. The temple of God. The temple of God is both the individual Christian and the Christian people who make up the Church. The temple is the shrine where God dwells. I Cor. 6 : 19; I John 4 : 16. In this passage the temple is the Church.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

As we near the close of the quarter, a lesson from one of Paul's letters is introduced, dealing with the special subject of temperance. It serves a double purpose. First of all, it brings each of us face to face with one of the most practical problems of our Christian faith, whereby we may pass judgment upon our daily life, our habits, our food, our clothes, our pleasures. In the second place, it gives us a concrete example of how Paul dealt with delicate questions and is an illustration of how he ministered to and cared for the churches which

he founded. The First Epistle to the Corinthians written about A.D. 56 or 57, deals with the party divisions and social problems which perplexed the church. He visited Corinth after he visited Athens, and founded a church there. The central thought of this Epistle and of the Second Epistle is the union of Christ and the Christian, as he expresses it in his Epistle to the Galatians. "I have been crucified with Christ," he says in that Epistle, "and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me." "Christ and the apostle are so united in mind and spirit that the very life of Christ, so to speak, pulsates in him. He has yielded himself so completely to Christ's influence, and drunk so deeply of his spirit, that he acts, speaks, thinks, and suffers 'in Christ.' The sense of personal union with Christ sustains him in all his efforts; and he desires to realize Christ's presence abiding with him in increasing degree."

In this lesson, Paul is dealing with idolatry, and with meats offered in sacrifice to idols and then afterwards offered for food, which made a cause of stumbling to many Christians. Paul points out that an idol is nothing, and therefore meat offered to an idol is not harmed or defiled. However if a Christian is offended by another person's eating such meat, that person should refrain from the use of meat offered to idols.

QUESTIONABLE PRACTICES

I Cor. 10 : 23

We must keep in mind the fact that Paul was writing to Christians who were still living in the atmosphere of heathenism. Their friends were heathen. Their children were married to heathen,

and when they were invited to social functions they mingled with people who were worshipers of idols. In these circumstances what should a Christian do and how should he act? Some things of course were absolutely wrong and these in all cases and everywhere should be shunned. But there were other things which were morally indifferent. They were not wrong in themselves but might become evil. Paul was a great believer in Christian liberty. He believed that Jesus and his gospel had set him free from many of the laws which the Jews held necessary and that if one had the right motive and true love for God and others he was free to do as he thought best. The Corinthian Christians had one particular problem which perplexed them. The city was full of idols and all meat offered for sale in the markets was meat that had first of all been offered in sacrifice to these idols. The question was, should Christians eat of this meat when offered it in the homes of their friends; should they buy it, or countenance it in any way? What was the duty of a Christian in such a case? Should he eat or not eat? There were good people who differed, and Paul had been asked for his opinion and he gave his answer in the verses of our lesson.

A PRINCIPLE OF CONDUCT

I Cor. 10 : 24

Before definitely giving an answer Paul lays down two general principles. He says first of all, that everything we do should be for what he calls "edification." In v. 23, he says, "All things are lawful; but not all things edify." The word "edify" means "to build up." It is the same as our word "edifice." Life, too, is a building, and although it may not be wrong to do this or that, yet everything must be judged in the light of whether what we do helps or hinders us in the making, or building of our lives. This is Paul's first principle. We are builders.

In the second place, Paul states that we are to determine the moral value of things not only by their effect upon us, but also by their effect upon others. "Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good." Things that may not hurt me, if they hurt some one else, are for me wrong. I must not do anything that will harm the life of anyone else. It was said of the poet Whittier that "he never darkened a day nor shadowed a life." That is a great tribute. The true Christian life is unselfish and seeks the good of others. To lead some one else into sin is to carry a double penalty and to lead some one else to do good, to lead some one else into the Christian life, is to receive a double blessing.

A PARTICULAR CASE OF CONSCIENCE

I Cor. 10 : 25-30

Having laid down general principles which help in the settling of any difficult moral question, Paul

gives his definite answer to the particular problem about eating meat offered to idols. In itself it is not wrong to eat such meat. An idol is nothing in the world, and meat offered to idols is not tainted by such silly sacrificial services. If, then, no question is raised and no information is given, the Christian is to eat what is set before him, asking no questions. But if there is some one present who is troubled about the matter and who says, "This meat was offered in sacrifice," then the case is altered. It is best then to refrain, so as not to hurt the conscience of another who thinks it wrong to eat.

THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

I Cor. 10 : 31-33

Before he leaves the subject, Paul returns to the great Christian principle which should guide all Christians in their social, business, and personal concerns. He says, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." This is one of the greatest verses in the New Testament and is followed by the advice so to live that others will not be hindered by our example, for we are all to be imitators of Christ. All life would be sacred if we would do all things to God's glory. We call to mind the answer to the first question in The Westminster Shorter Catechism, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever." We are God's servants. We are to serve him in all things. When we serve anything else, or give our hearts to anything that he disowns, we turn away from God to the worship of idols.

THE LIFE THAT IS PURE

I Cor. 3 : 16, 17

The lesson verses turn back to one of Paul's favorite illustrations. Christian people are the temple of God. God does not dwell in temples made of stone and marble. This was the very thing Paul told the people of Athens in our last lesson. Acts 17 : 24-28. God's dwelling place is "an humble and a contrite heart." In this same letter he says, "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." For his sake we are to keep ourselves pure. If we could only realize that God is our ever-present Guest, then we would keep out of our lives everything that is harmful, impure, or unholy. We would keep the temple of our heart furnished and ready always for him.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Why did Paul write his letters to the church at Corinth?
2. How was the life of the Corinthian Christians different from our life to-day?
3. What does "eating meat offered to idols" mean?
4. What was Paul's answer to the question about eating meat offered in sacrifice?

5. What does it mean to be imitators of Christ?
6. Where is God's dwelling place?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 53. What is the duty of deacons?

A. The duty of deacons is to care for the poor and to distribute the offerings made for them.

Q. 54. What is the duty of trustees?

A. The duty of trustees is to control and care for the property of a church, under the laws of the State and the Church, and to manage its material interests so as to promote its spiritual welfare.

Q. 55. By whom are officers in a Presbyterian church chosen?

A. The officers in a Presbyterian church are chosen by the people.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Relate the teaching of this lesson to the temperance problem.
2. Was it harder to be a Christian in Paul's day than it is in our day?
3. When is a thing judged to be wrong?
4. What particular answer does Paul give to the question about eating meat offered in sacrifice?
5. What general Christian principles does Paul lay down as guides to conduct?
6. What is man's chief end?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 39. What is the duty which God requireth of man?

A. The duty which God requireth of man is obedience to his revealed will.

Lesson XIII—REVIEW

The Golden Text—"So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith."—Gal. 6 : 10.

Devotional Reading, Gal. 6: 1-10.

DAILY HOME READINGS

DATE	TITLE	REFERENCE
Monday, September 19.....	Saul Persecuting.....	Acts 7 : 54 to 8 : 1.
Tuesday, September 20.....	Saul's Conversion.....	Acts 9 : 1-9.
Wednesday, September 21.....	Early Witnessing.....	Acts 9 : 20-29.
Thursday, September 22.....	Paul in Antioch.....	Acts 11 : 22-30.
Friday, September 23.....	Paul in Athens.....	Acts 17 : 22-34.
Saturday, September 24.....	Abstinence for the Sake of Others.....	I Cor., ch. 8.
Sunday, September 25.....	Sowing and Reaping.....	Gal. 6 : 1-10.

REVIEW

The lessons during the past three months have been based upon the life of the Apostle Paul. Review the titles of the eleven lessons dealing with the life of Paul. These lessons are followed by a temperance lesson, "Abstinence for the Sake of Others." This lesson review will not go back over the lessons one by one, but will treat of the life and work of Paul during that period of his life which has been studied during the quarter.

THE EARLY LIFE OF SAUL

Saul was a Jew, born of Jewish parents, but possessing Roman citizenship. He was born in Tarsus, a great commercial city in Cilicia, where there was a famous Gentile university. He was educated in his home, and in the synagogue of his native city, learned the trade of tent-making, and at the age of fifteen entered the School of the Rabbis at Jerusalem, where he was trained as a rabbi by Gamaliel, an eminent teacher of his day. For some years after the completion of his studies, history has nothing to say about him. Doubtless he returned to Tarsus and taught in the native synagogue. He lived the life of a devout and consistent Pharisee, the strictest sect of the Jewish religion. The Pharisees believed in loyalty to the word and law of God, and sought to excel in righteous living. They be-

lieved in the overruling providence of God, and in the immortal life. Saul sought to follow out to the letter the whole Law of God as it was written, not only in the Old Testament, but in the teachings of the rabbis. Saul was splendidly equipped for life. He had a fine intellectual training and his life had been lived in a cosmopolitan, Greek-speaking city. This subject is covered in the first two lessons of the quarter—"The Early Life of Saul," and "Saul the Pharisee."

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

We meet with Saul when Stephen, the first martyr, was put to death. Stephen was one of the deacons of the Early Church, a man of great eloquence and filled with the Holy Spirit. In the seventh chapter of The Acts we have his wonderful address. At the close of it the people were so angry that they led him out of the city and stoned him to death. We read that Saul gave his consent to the death of Stephen and that the men who stoned Stephen laid down their garments at his feet.

After the death of Stephen, a wave of persecution broke out against the Christians and the disciples were scattered everywhere. Saul became the appointed leader of the persecutors and journeyed to Damascus to carry on his cruel work. When near Damascus, suddenly he was struck down by a

blinding light and Jesus himself was revealed to him. In this way Saul became a Christian, and after three days of blindness he was baptized into the Christian faith by Ananias and immediately began to preach Christ in Damascus. The subject of Saul's conversion is dealt with in the third lesson of the quarter, "The Conversion of Saul."

PREPARING FOR SERVICE

When he testified to Jesus in Damascus an attempt was made upon his life, and, escaping from Damascus, he fled in the night and for at least a year or more was in solitude in Arabia. On his return he went up to Jerusalem to visit the apostles and especially to get acquainted with Peter. At first the disciples were afraid of him and would have nothing to do with him. But Barnabas, a sweet-spirited Christian, took Saul and vouched for him and for about two weeks he continued in Jerusalem, conversing with Peter and testifying in the synagogues where once he had blasphemed the name of Jesus. After his return from Jerusalem he seems to have retired to his home in Tarsus. This period in Saul's life is dealt with in the fourth and fifth lessons of the quarter, "Saul Proclaims Jesus as the Christ," and "Saul Teaching at Antioch."

THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

The church at Antioch early admitted Gentiles to the privileges of the gospel. Indeed the missionary workers from Cyprus and Cyrene had definitely set about evangelizing the Greeks of Antioch. There the purpose to preach the gospel to the whole world seemed to take possession of the Church, and they ordained Paul and Barnabas to go forth into distant parts. Saul planned and carried out three great missionary journeys. The first started from Antioch. Saul was accompanied by Barnabas and John Mark. They sailed from Seleucia, the seaport of Antioch, to Salamis, the seaport of Cyprus, and went overland to Paphos, where Saul caused Elymas, the sorcerer, to become blind for a season, and where he won the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, to the gospel faith. From this time on Saul is called by his Gentile name, Paul. From there they sailed to Perga, where John left them, returning to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas then passed into the interior of Asia Minor, preaching at Antioch in Pisidia where they were persecuted. They then went to Iconium and Lystra, where Paul was taken for Mercury and Barnabas for Jupiter and where Paul was stoned and left for dead outside the city. Going on to the limit of the road, they preached at Derbe and then retraced their steps overland and took ship back to Antioch. This missionary journey was outlined in Lessons 6 and 7, "Paul in Cyprus and in Antioch of Pisidia," and "Paul in Iconium and Lystra."

THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

The remaining lessons of the quarter concerning Paul, belong to the story of his second missionary

journey. These lessons are: "Paul Prepares for World Conquest," "From Asia to Europe," "From Philippi to Athens," and "Paul in Athens."

Objections had been taken to the admission of Greeks into the Christian Church without their first having become Jewish proselytes and having given their obedience to the Jewish ceremonial Law. Paul took the case to the Jerusalem Church, and after long argument, won his point. Thus freed from criticism and obstacles, he and Barnabas were ready to set forth on their second missionary journey. A dispute arose however, between them as to whether John Mark should go with them. Paul refused to take him and started off with Silas. Barnabas took Mark and went to Cyprus, where he drops out of the history. Paul and Silas traveled overland through Syria and Cilicia, and passing through the places formerly visited, Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, they went direct to Troas. The Spirit of God urged them on. Timothy had accompanied them from Lystra, and Luke, the author of The Acts, joined them at Troas. There Paul saw in a vision a man from Macedonia, appealing for help, and immediately they passed over to Europe. At Philippi they found Lydia ready to receive the gospel message and they made her home their headquarters. By healing a slave girl they aroused the wrath of her owners, and Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned. In the night God threw open the prison doors, and the Philippian jailer was converted and Paul and Silas set free. Paul had claimed his Roman citizenship and the magistrates, fearing the wrath of Rome, begged them to depart. Paul, with Silas and Timothy, passed south through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica, where he founded a church. Persecuted, he departed to Berea, where he was more seriously received, but being again persecuted, he took ship for Athens. At Athens Paul preached his great sermon about the altar with the inscription, "To an Unknown God." The lessons of the quarter close with Paul in Athens. The remaining lesson is taken from Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, where he goes after leaving Athens.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What effect had Stephen's death on Paul?
2. What is conversion?
3. Name some of Paul's companions.
4. What was the decision of the council at Jerusalem?
5. Outline Paul's sermon at Athens.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. How did Paul learn the facts about the gospel?
2. What help did Barnabas give Paul?
3. Why was Paul so influential?
4. What led Paul to Europe?
5. What were the fundamental principles of the gospel as preached by Paul?
6. Why was Paul such a success as a missionary?

ORDERS OF SERVICE FOR THE THIRD QUARTER, 1921¹

OPENING SERVICE, No. 1

DOORS CLOSED.

PIANO.—“Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove.”

OPENING PRAYER.

DOORS OPENED.

HYMN.—“Alleluia,” No. 234, “Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus.”

OPENING SENTENCES:

LEADER.—Oh sing unto Jehovah a new song;
For he hath done marvellous things:

SCHOOL.—His right hand, and his holy arm, hath wrought salvation for him.

LEADER.—Make a joyful noise unto Jehovah, all the earth:

BOYS.—Break forth and sing for joy, yea, sing praises.

GIRLS.—Sing praises unto Jehovah with the harp;
With the harp and the voice of melody.

TEACHERS.—Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof;
The world, and they that dwell therein;

LEADER.—Let the floods clap their hands;
Let the hills sing for joy together

ALL.—Before Jehovah; for he cometh to judge the earth:

He will judge the world with righteousness,
And the peoples with equity.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

SILENT PRAYER.

HYMN.—“Alleluia,” No. 1, “All People That on Earth Do Dwell.”

MISSIONARY STORY BY SUPERINTENDENT OR PASTOR.

SALUTE TO AMERICAN AND CHRISTIAN FLAGS.

MISSIONARY HYMN.—“Alleluia,” No. 140, “We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations.”

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON.

PRAYER HYMN.—“Alleluia,” No. 103, “Break Thou the Bread of Life.”

THE LESSON.

PIANO OR ORCHESTRA.—“Alleluia,” No. 88, “There Is No Name so Sweet on Earth.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS.

HYMN.—“Alleluia,” No. 46, “Jesus Calls Us, O’er the Tumult.”

CLOSING PRAYER.

OPENING SERVICE No. 2.

DOORS CLOSED FOR SILENCE.

HYMN.—(Without announcement) One Verse, “Alleluia,” No. 109, “Come, Thou Almighty King.”

(School Standing)

OPENING SENTENCES:

LEADER.—Our help is in the name of Jehovah,
SCHOOL.—Who made heaven and earth.

LEADER.—Jehovah is nigh unto all them that call upon him,

SCHOOL.—To all that call upon him in truth.

LEADER.—He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him;

SCHOOL.—He also will hear their cry, and will save them.

LEADER.—Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found;

SCHOOL.—Call ye upon him while he is near:

LEADER.—Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;

SCHOOL.—And let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

DOORS OPENED.

HYMN.—“Alleluia,” No. 16, “Praise the Lord: Ye Heavens Adore Him.”

PRAYER, CLOSING WITH THE LORD’S PRAYER.

SPECIAL MUSIC.—Solo or Instrumental.

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON.

THE LESSON RESPONSE.—“Alleluia,” No. 105.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR.

RECORDS AND OFFERING.

THE LESSON HYMN.—“Alleluia,” No. 107, “Lamp of My Feet.”

MUSIC BY PIANO OR ORCHESTRA.

THE LESSON PERIOD.

PIANO.—(Played softly.)

REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

HYMN.—“Alleluia,” No. 220, “There’s a Royal Banner.”

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

THE BENEDICTION.

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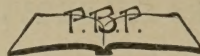
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